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MELMOTH

THE

WANDERER:

A

TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BERTRAM," &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND COMPANY,
AND HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO. CHEAPSIDE,
LONDON.

1820.

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MELMOTH.

CHAPTER XII.

Juravi lingua, mentem injuratam gero.——
Who brought you first acquainted with the devil?
SHIRLEY'S ST PATRICK FOR IRELAND.

" I RAN on till I had no longer breath or strength, (without perceiving that I was in a dark passage), till I was stopt by a door. In falling against it, I burst it open, and found myself in a low dark room. When I raised myself, for I had fallen on my hands and knees, I looked round, and saw something so singular, as to suspend even my personal anxiety and terror for a moment.

"The room was very small; and I could perceive by the rents, that I had not only broken open a door, but a large curtain which hung before it, whose ample folds still afforded me concealment if I required it. There was no one in the room, and I had time to study its singular furniture at leisure.

"There was a table covered with cloth; on it were placed a vessel of a singular construction, a book, into whose pages I looked, but could not make out a single letter. I therefore wisely took it for a book of magic, and closed it with a feeling of exculpatory horror. (It happened to be a copy of the Hebrew Bible, marked with the Samaritan points). There was a knife too; and a cock was fastened to the leg of the table, whose loud crows announced his impatience of further constraint *.

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* Quilibet postea paterfamilias, cum *gallo* præ manibus, in medium primus prodit. * *

* * * * * *

" I felt that this apparatus was somewhat singular—it looked like a preparation for a sacrifice. I shuddered, and wrapt myself in the volumes of the drapery which hung before the door my fall had broken open. A dim lamp, suspended from the ceiling, discovered to me all these objects, and enabled me to observe what followed almost immediately. A man of middle age, but whose physiognomy had something peculiar in it, even to the eye of a Spaniard, from the clustering darkness of his eye-brows, his prominent nose, and a certain lustre in the balls of his eyes, en-

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Deinde expiationem aggreditur et capiti suo ter gallum allidit, singulosque ictus his vocibus prosequitur. Hic Gallus sit permutio pro me, &c. *

* * * * * *

Gallo deinde imponens manus, eum statim mactat, &c.

Vide Buxtorf, as quoted in Dr Magee (Bishop of Raphoe's) work on the atonement. Cumberland in his Observer, I think, mentions the discovery to have been reserved for the feast of the Passover. It is just as probable it was made on the day of expiation.

tered the room, knelt before the table, kissed the book that lay on it, and read from it some sentences that were to precede, as I imagined, some horrible sacrifice;—felt the edge of the knife, knelt again, uttered some words which I did not understand, (as they were in the language of that book), and then called aloud on some one by the name of Manasseh-ben-Solomon. No one answered. He sighed, passed his hand over his eyes with the air of a man who is asking pardon of himself for a short forgetfulness, and then pronounced the name of "Antonio." A young man immediately entered, and answered, "Did you call me, Father?"—But while he spoke, he threw a hollow and wandering glance on the singular furniture of the room.

"I called you, my son, and why did you not answer me?"—"I did not hear you, father—I mean, I did not think it was on me you called. I heard only a name I was never called by before. When you said 'Antonio,' I obeyed you—I came."—

" But *that* is the name by which you must in future be called and be known, to me at least, unless you prefer another.—You shall have your choice."—" My father, I shall adopt whatever name you choose."—" No; the choice of your new name must be your own—you must, for the future, either adopt the name you have heard, or another."—" What other, Sir?"—" *That of parricide.*" The youth shuddered with horror, less at the words than at the expression that accompanied them; and, after looking at his father for some time in a posture of tremulous and supplicating inquiry, he burst into tears. The father seized the moment. He grasped the arms of his son, " My child, I gave you life, and you may repay the gift—my life is in your power. You think me a Catholic—I have brought you up as one for the preservation of our mutual lives, in a country where the confession of the true faith would infallibly cost both. I am one of that unhappy race every where stigmatized and

spoken against, yet on whose industry and talent the ungrateful country that anathematizes us, depends for half the sources of its national prosperity. I am a Jew, "an Israelite," one of those to whom, even by the confession of a Christian apostle, "pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh—" Here he paused, not willing to go on with a quotation that would have contradicted his sentiments. He added, "The Messias will come, whether suffering or triumphant *. I am a Jew. I called you at the hour of your birth by the name of Manasseh-ben-Solomon. I called on you by that name, which I felt had clung to the bottom of my heart from that hour, and which, echoing from its abyss,

* The Jews believe in two Messias, a suffering and a triumphant one, to reconcile the prophecies with their own expectations.

I almost hoped you would have recognized. It was a dream, but will you not, my beloved child, realize that dream? Will you not?—will you not? The God of your fathers is waiting to embrace you—and your father is at your feet, imploring you to follow the faith of your father Abraham, the prophet Moses, and all the holy prophets who are with God, and who look down on this moment of your soul's vacillation between the abominable idolatries of those who not only adore the Son of the carpenter, but even impiously compel you to fall down before the image of the woman his mother, and adore her by the blasphemous name of Mother of God,—and the pure voice of those who call on you to worship the God of your fathers, the God of ages, the eternal God of heaven and earth, without son or mother, without child or descendant, (as impiously presumed in their blasphemous creed), without even worshipper, save those who, like me, sacrifice their hearts to him

in solitude, at the risk of those hearts being PIERCED BY THEIR OWN CHILDREN.

"At these words, the young man, overcome by all he saw and heard, and quite unprepared for this sudden transition from Catholicism to Judaism, burst into tears. The father seized the moment, "My child, you are now to profess yourself the slave of these idolaters, who are cursed in the law of Moses, and by the commandment of God,—or to enrol yourself among the faithful, whose rest shall be in the bosom of Abraham, and who, reposing there, shall see the unbelieving crawling over the burning ashes of hell, and supplicate you in vain for a drop of water, according to the legends of their own prophet. And does not such a picture excite your pride to deny them a drop?"—"I would not deny them a drop," sobbed the youth, "I would give them these tears."—"Reserve them for your father's grave," added the Jew, "for to the grave you have doomed me.—I have lived, sparing, watching, temporiz-

ing, with these accursed idolaters, for *you*. And now—and now you reject a God who is alone able to save, and a father kneeling to implore you to accept that salvation."—"No, I do not," said the bewildered youth.—"What, then, do you determine?—I am at your feet to know your resolution. Behold, the mysterious instruments of your initiation are ready. There is the uncorrupted book of Moses, the prophet of God, as these idolaters themselves confess. There are all the preparations for the year of expiation—determine whether those rites shall now dedicate you to the true God, or seize your father, (who has put his life into your hands), and drag him by the throat into the prisons of the Inquisition. You may—you can—*will you?*"

"In prostrate and tremulous agony, the father held up his locked hands to his child. I seized the moment—despair had made me reckless. I understood not a word of what was said, except the reference to the Inquisition. I seized on that

last word—I grasped, in my despair, at the heart of father and child. I rushed from behind the curtain, and exclaiming, "If he does not betray you to the Inquisition, *I will.*" I fell at his feet. This mixture of defiance and prostration, my squalid figure, my inquisitorial habit, and my bursting on this secret and solemn interview, struck the Jew with a horror he vainly gasped to express, till, rising from my knees, on which I had fallen from my weakness, I added, "Yes, I will betray you to the Inquisition, unless you instantly promise to shelter me from it." The Jew glanced at my dress, perceived his danger and mine, and, with a *physical* presence of mind unparalleled, except in a man under strong impressions of mental excitation and personal danger, bustled about to remove every trace of the expiatory sacrifice, and of my inquisitorial costume, in a moment. In the same breath he called aloud for *Rebekah*, to remove the vessels from the table; bid *Antonio* quit

the apartment, and hastened to clothe me in some dress that he had snatched from a wardrobe collected from centuries; while he tore off my inquisitorial dress with a violence that left me actually naked, and the habit in rags.

"There was something at once fearful and ludicrous in the scene that followed. Rebekah, an old Jewish woman, came at his call; but, seeing a third person, retreated in terror, while her master, in his confusion, called her in vain by her *Christian* name of Maria. Obliged to remove the table alone, he overthrew it, and broke the leg of the unfortunate animal fastened to it, who, not to be without his share in the tumult, uttered the most shrill and intolerable screams, while the Jew, snatching up the sacrificial knife, repeated eagerly, "Statim mactat gallum," and put the wretched bird out of its pain; then, trembling at this open avowal of his Judaism, he sat down amid the ruins of the overthrown table, the fragments of the broken

vessels, and the remains of the martyred cock. He gazed at me with a look of stupified and ludicrous inanity, and demanded in delirious tones, what "my lords the Inquisitors had pleased to visit his humble but highly-honoured mansion for?" I was scarce less deranged than he was; and, though we both spoke the same language, and were forced by circumstances into the same strange and desperate confidence with each other, we really needed, for the first half-hour, a rational interpreter of our exclamations, starts of fear, and bursts of disclosure. At last our mutual terror acted honestly between us, and we understood each other. The end of the matter was, that, in less than an hour, I felt myself clad in a comfortable garment, seated at a table amply spread, watched over by my involuntary host, and watching him in turn with red wolfish eyes, which glanced from his board to his person, as if I could, at a moment's hint of danger from *his* treachery, have chang-

ed my meal, and feasted on his life-blood. No such danger occurred,—my host was more afraid of me than I had reason to be of him, and for many causes. He was a Jew *innate*, an impostor,—a wretch, who, drawing sustenance from the bosom of our holy mother the church, had turned her nutriment to poison, and attempted to infuse that poison into the lips of his son. I was but a fugitive from the Inquisition, —a prisoner, who had a kind of instinctive and very venial dislike to giving the Inquisitors the trouble of lighting the faggots for *me*, which would be much better employed in consuming the adherent to the law of Moses. In fact, impartiality considered, there was every thing in my favour, and the Jew just acted as if he felt so,—but all this I ascribed to his terrors of the Inquisition.

"That night I slept,—I know not how or where. I had wild dreams before I slept, if I did sleep; and after,—such visions,—such *things*, passed in dread and

stern reality before me. I have often in my memory searched for the traces of the first night I passed under the roof of the Jew, but can find nothing,—nothing except a conviction of my utter insanity. It might not have been so,—I know not how it was. I remember his lighting me up a narrow stair, and my asking him, was he lighting me *down* the steps of the dungeons of the Inquisition?—his throwing open a door, and my asking him, was it the door of the torture-room?—his attempting to undress me, and my exclaiming, "Do not bind me too tight,—I know I must suffer, but be merciful;"—his throwing me on the bed, while I shrieked, "Well, you have bound me on the rack, then?—strain it hard, that I may forget myself the sooner; but let your surgeon not be near to watch my pulse,—let it cease to throb, and let me cease to suffer." I remember no more for many days, though I have struggled to do so, and caught from time to time glimpses of thoughts better lost. Oh, Sir,

there are some *criminals of the imagination*, whom if we could plunge into the *oubliettes* of its magnificent but lightly-based fabric, its lord would reign more happy. * * *

* * * *

" Many days elapsed, indeed, before the Jew began to feel his immunity somewhat dearly purchased, by the additional maintenance of a troublesome, and, I fear, a deranged inmate. He took the first opportunity that the recovery of my intellect offered, of hinting this to me, and inquired mildly what I purposed to do, and where I meant to go. This question for the first time opened to my view that range of hopeless and interminable desolation that lay before me,—the Inquisition had laid waste the whole track of life, as with fire and sword. I had not a spot to stand on, a meal to earn, a hand to grasp, a voice to greet, a roof to crouch under, in the whole realm of Spain.

" You are not to learn, Sir, that the power

of the Inquisition, like that of death, separates you, by its single touch, from all mortal relations. From the moment its grasp has seized you, all human hands unlock their hold of yours,—you have no longer father, mother, sister, or child. The most devoted and affectionate of all those relatives, who, in the natural intercourse of human life, would have laid their hands under your feet to procure you a smoother passage over its roughnesses, would be the first to grasp the faggot that was to reduce you to ashes, if the Inquisition were to demand the sacrifice. I knew all this; and I felt, besides, that, had I never been a prisoner in the Inquisition, I was an isolated being, rejected by father and mother, —the involuntary murderer of my brother, the only being on earth who loved me, or whom I could love or profit by,—that being who seemed to flash across my brief *human* existence, to illuminate and to blast. The bolt had perished with the victim. In Spain it was impossible for me

to live without detection, unless I plunged myself into an imprisonment as profound and hopeless as that of the Inquisition. And, if a miracle were wrought to convey me out of Spain, ignorant as I was of the language, the habits, and the modes of obtaining subsistence, in that or any other country, how could I support myself even for a day. Absolute famine stared me in the face, and a sense of degradation accompanying my consciousness of my own utter and desolate helplessness, was the keenest shaft in the quiver, whose contents were lodged in my heart. My consequence was actually lessened in my own eyes, by ceasing to become the victim of persecution, by which I had suffered so long. *While people think it worth their while to torment us, we are never without some dignity, though painful and imaginary.* Even in the Inquisition I belonged to somebody,—I was watched and guarded;—now, I was the

outcast of the whole earth, and I wept with equal bitterness and depression at the hopeless vastness of the desert I had to traverse.

"The Jew, not at all disturbed by these feelings, went daily out for intelligence, and returned one evening in such raptures, that I could easily discover he had ascertained his own safety at least, if not mine. He informed me that the current report in Madrid was, that I had perished in the fall of the burning ruins on the night of the fire. He added, that this report had received additional currency and strength from the fact, that the bodies of those who had perished by the fall of the arch, were, when discovered, so defaced by fire, and so crushed by the massive fragments, as to be utterly undistinguishable;—their remains had been collected, however, and mine were supposed to be among the number. A mass had been performed for them, and *their cinders, occupying but a*

single coffin *, were interred in the vaults of the Dominican church, while some of the first families of Spain, in the deepest mourning, and their faces veiled, testified their grief in silence for those whom they would have shuddered to acknowledge their mortal relationship to, had they been still living. Certainly a lump of cinders was no longer an object even of religious hostility. My mother, he added, was among the number of mourners, but with a veil so long and thick, and attendance so few, that it would have been impossible to have known the Duchess di Monçada, but for the whisper that her appearance there had been enjoined for penance. He added, what gave me more perfect satisfaction, that the holy office was very glad

* This extraordinary fact occurred after the dreadful fire which consumed sixteen persons in one house, in Stephen's Green, Dublin, 1816. The writer of this heard the screams of sufferers whom it was impossible to save, for an hour and a half.

to accredit the story of my death; they wished me to be believed dead, and what the Inquisition wishes to be believed, is rarely denied belief in Madrid. This signing my certificate of death, was to me the best security for life. In the communicativeness of his joy, which had expanded his heart, if not his hospitality, the Jew, as I swallowed my bread and water, (for my stomach still loathed all animal food), informed me that there was a procession to take place that evening, the most solemn and superb ever witnessed in Madrid. The holy office was to appear in all the pomp and plenitude of its glory, accompanied by the standards of St Dominic and the cross, while all the ecclesiastical orders in Madrid were to attend with their appropriate insignia, invested by a strong military guard, (which, for some reason or other, was judged necessary or proper), and, attended by the whole populace of Madrid, was to proceed to the principal church to humiliate themselves for the re-

cent calamity they had undergone, and implore the saints to be more personally active in the event of a future conflagration.

" The evening came on—the Jew left me; and, under an impression at once unaccountable and irresistible, I ascended to the highest apartment in his house, and, with a beating heart, listened for the toll of the bells that was to announce the commencement of the ceremony. I had not long to wait. At the close of twilight, every steeple in the city was vibrating with the tolls of their well-plied bells. I was in an upper room of the house. There was but one window; but, hiding myself behind the blind, which I withdrew from time to time, I had a full view of the spectacle. The house of the Jew looked out on an open space, through which the procession was to pass, and which was already so filled, that I wondered how the procession could ever make its way through such a wedged and impenetrable mass. At

last, I could distinguish a motion like that of a distant power, giving a kind of indefinite impulse to the vast body that rolled and blackened beneath me, like the ocean under the first and far-felt agitations of the storm.

"The crowd rocked and reeled, but did not seem to give way an inch. The procession commenced. I could see it approach, marked as it was by the crucifix, banner, and taper—(for they had reserved the procession till a late hour, to give it the imposing effect of torch-light.) And I saw the multitude at a vast distance give way at once. Then came on the stream of the procession, rushing, like a magnificent river, between two banks of human bodies, who kept as regular and strict distance, as if they had been ramparts of stone,—the banners, and crucifixes, and tapers, appearing like the crests of foam on advancing billows, sometimes rising, sometimes sinking. At last they came on, and the whole grandeur of the procession

burst on my view, and nothing was ever more imposing, or more magnificent. The habits of the ecclesiastics, the glare of the torches struggling with the dying twilight, and seeming to say to heaven, We have a sun though your's is set;—the solemn and resolute look of the whole party, who trod as if their march were on the bodies of kings, and looked as if they would have said, What is the sceptre to the cross?—the black crucifix itself, trembling in the rear, attended by the banner of St Dominick, with its awful inscription.—It was a sight to convert all hearts, and I exulted I was a Catholic. Suddenly a tumult seemed to arise among the crowd—I knew not from what it could arise—all seemed so pleased and so elated.

" I drew away the blind, and saw, by torch-light, among a crowd of officials who clustered round the standard of St Dominick, the figure of my companion. His story was well known. At first a faint hiss was heard, then a wild and smothered

howl. Then I heard voices among the crowd repeat, in audible sounds, "What is this for? Why do they ask why the Inquisition has been half-burned?—why the virgin has withdrawn her protection?—why the saints turn away their faces from us?—when a parricide marches among the officials of the Inquisition. Are the hands that have cut a father's throat fit to support the banner of the cross?" These were the words but of a few at first, but the whisper spread rapidly among the crowd; and fierce looks were darted, and hands were clenched and raised, and some stooped to the earth for stones. The procession went on, however, and every one knelt to the crucifixes as they advanced, held aloft by the priests. But the murmurs increased too, and the words, "parricide, profanation, and victim," resounded on every side, even from those who knelt in the mire as the cross passed by. The murmur increased—it could no longer be mistaken for that of adoration. The fore-

most priests paused in terror ill concealed —and this seemed the signal for the terrible scene that was about to follow. An officer belonging to the guard at this time ventured to intimate to the chief Inquisitor the danger that might be apprehended, but was dismissed with the short and sullen answer, "Move on—the servants of Christ have nothing to fear." The procession attempted to proceed, but their progress was obstructed by the multitude, who now seemed bent on some deadly purpose. A few stones were thrown; but the moment the priests raised their crucifixes, the multitude were on their knees again, still, however, holding the stones in their hands. The military officers again addressed the chief Inquisitor, and intreated his permission to disperse the crowd. They received the same dull and stern answer, "The cross is sufficient for the protection of its servants—whatever fears you may feel, I feel none." Incensed at the reply, a young officer

sprung on his horse, which he had quitted from respect while addressing the Suprema, and was in a moment levelled by the blow of a stone that fractured his skull. He turned his blood-swimming eyes on the Inquisitor, and died. The multitude raised a wild shout, and pressed closer. Their intentions were now too plain. They pressed close on that part of the procession among which their victim was placed. Again, and in the most urgent terms, the officers implored leave to disperse the crowd, or at least cover the retreat of the obnoxious object to some neighbouring church, or even to the walls of the Inquisition. And the wretched man himself, with loud outcries, (as he saw the danger thickening around him), joined in their petition. The Suprema, though looking pale, bated not a jot of his pride. "These are my arms!" he exclaimed, pointing to the crucifixes, "and their inscription is EN-TOUTŌ-NIKA. I forbid a sword to be drawn, or a musket to be

levelled. On, in the name of God." And on they attempted to move, but the pressure now rendered it impossible. The multitude, unrepressed by the military, became ungovernable; the crosses reeled and rocked like standards in a battle; the ecclesiastics, in confusion and terror, pressed on each other. Amid that vast mass, every particle of which seemed in motion, there was but one emphatic and discriminate movement—that which bore a certain part of the crowd strait on to the spot where their victim, though inclosed and inwrapt by all that is formidable in earthly, and all that is awful in spiritual power—sheltered by the crucifix and the sword—stood trembling to the bottom of his soul. The Suprema saw his error too late, and now called loudly on the military to advance, and disperse the crowd by any means. They attempted to obey him; but by this time they were mingled among the crowd themselves. All order had ceased; and besides, there appeared a kind of indisposition to

this service, from the very first, among the military. They attempted to charge, however; but, entangled as they were among the crowd, who clung round their horses hoofs, it was impossible for them even to form, and the first shower of stones threw them into total confusion. The danger increased every moment, for one spirit now seemed to animate the whole multitude. What had been the stifled growl of a few, was now the audible yell of all—"Give him to us—we must have him;" and they tossed and roared like a thousand waves assailing a wreck. As the military retreated, a hundred priests instantly closed round the unhappy man, and with generous despair exposed themselves to the fury of the multitude. While the Suprema, hastening to the dreadful spot, stood in the front of the priests, with the cross uplifted,—his face was like that of the dead, but his eye had not lost a single flash of its fire, nor his voice a tone of

its pride. It was in vain; the multitude proceeded calmly, and even respectfully, (when not resisted), to remove all that obstructed their progress; in doing so, they took every care of the persons of priests whom they were compelled to remove, repeatedly asking their pardon for the violence they were guilty of. And this tranquillity of resolved vengeance was the most direful indication of its never desisting till its purpose was accomplished. The last ring was broken—the last resister overcome. Amid yells like those of a thousand tigers, the victim was seized and dragged forth, grasping in both hands fragments of the robes of those he had clung to in vain, and holding them up in the impotence of despair.

"The cry was hushed for a moment, as they felt him in their talons, and gazed on him with thirsty eyes. Then it was renewed, and the work of blood began. They dashed him to the earth—tore him

up again—flung him into the air—tossed him from hand to hand, as a bull gores the howling mastiff with horns right and left. Bloody, defaced, blackened with earth, and battered with stones, he struggled and roared among them, till a loud cry announced the hope of a termination to a scene alike horrible to humanity, and disgraceful to civilization. The military, strongly reinforced, came galloping on, and all the ecclesiastics, with torn habits, and broken crucifixes, following fast in the rear,—all eager in the cause of human nature—all on fire to prevent this base and barbarous disgrace to the name of Christianity and of human nature.

"Alas! this interference only hastened the horrible catastrophe. There was but a shorter space for the multitude to work their furious will. I saw, I felt, but I cannot describe, the last moments of this horrible scene. Dragged from the mud and stones, they dashed a mangled lump of

flesh right against the door of the house where I was. With his tongue hanging from his lacerated mouth, like that of a baited bull; with one eye torn from the socket, and dangling on his bloody cheek; with a fracture in every limb, and a wound for every pore, he still howled for "life—life—life—mercy!" till a stone, aimed by some pitying hand, struck him down. He fell, trodden in one moment into sanguine and discoloured mud by a thousand feet. The cavalry came on, charging with fury. The crowd, saturated with cruelty and blood, gave way in grim silence. But they had not left a joint of his little finger—a hair of his head—a slip of his skin. Had Spain mortgaged all her reliques from Madrid to Monserrat, from the Pyrennees to Gibraltar, she could not have recovered the paring of a nail to canonize. The officer who headed the troop dashed his horse's hoofs into a bloody formless mass, and demanded, "Where was the victim?" He was answered, "Beneath

your horse's feet *;" and they departed. * * * *

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"It is a fact, Sir, that while witnessing this horrible execution, I felt all the effects vulgarly ascribed to fascination. I shuddered at the first movement—the dull and deep whisper among the crowd. I shrieked involuntarily when the first decisive movements began among them; but when at last the human shapeless carrion was dashed against the door, I echoed the wild shouts of the multitude with a kind of savage instinct. I bounded—I clasped my hands for a moment—then I echoed the screams of the thing that seemed no longer to live, but still could scream; and I screamed aloud and wildly for life—life—and mercy! One face was turned towards

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* This circumstance occurred in Ireland 1797, after the murder of the unfortunate Dr Hamilton. The officer was answered, on inquiring what was that heap of mud at his horse's feet,—"The man you came for."

me as I shrieked in unconscious tones. The glance, fixed on me for a moment, was in a moment withdrawn. The flash of the well-known eyes made no impression on me then. My existence was so purely mechanical, that, without the least consciousness of my own danger, (scarce less than that of the victim, had I been detected), I remained uttering shout for shout, and scream for scream—offering worlds in imagination to be able to remove from the window, yet feeling as if every shriek I uttered was as a nail that fastened me to it—dropping my eye-lids, and feeling as if a hand held them open, or cut them away—forcing me to gaze on all that passed below, like Regulus, with his lids cut off, compelled to gaze on the sun that withered up his eye-balls—till sense, and sight, and soul, failed me, and I fell grasping by the bars of the window, and mimicking, in my horrid trance, the shouts of the multitude, and the yell of the de-

voted *. I actually for a moment believed myself the object of their cruelty. The drama of terror has the irresistible power of converting its audience into its victims.

"The Jew had kept apart from the tumult of the night. He had, I suppose,

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* In the year 1803, when Emmett's insurrection broke out in Dublin—(*the fact* from which this account is drawn was related to me by an eye-witness)—Lord Kilwarden, in passing through Thomas Street, was dragged from his carriage, and murdered in the most horrid manner. Pike after pike was thrust through his body, till at last he was *nailed to a door*, and called out to his murderers to "put him out of his pain." At this moment, a shoemaker, who lodged in the garret of an opposite house, was drawn to the window by the horrible cries he heard. He stood at the window, gasping with horror, his wife attempting vainly to drag him away. He saw the last blow struck—he heard the last groan uttered, as the sufferer cried, "put me out of pain," while sixty pikes were thrusting at him. The man stood at his window as if nailed to it; and when dragged from it, became—an *idiot for life*.

been saying within himself, in the language of your admirable poet,

"Oh, Father Abraham, what these Christians are!"

But when he returned at a late hour, he was struck with horror at the state in which he found me. I was delirious,—raving, and all he could say or do to soothe me, was in vain. My imagination had been fearfully impressed, and the consternation of the poor Jew was, I have been told, equally ludicrous and dismal. In his terror, he forgot all the technical formality of the Christian names by which he had uniformly signalized his household, since his residence in Madrid at least. He called aloud on Manasseh-ben-Solomon his son, and Rebekah his maid, to assist in holding me. "Oh, Father Abraham, my ruin is certain, this maniac will discover all, and Manasseh-ben-Solomon, my son, will die uncircumcised."

"These words operating on my delirium, I started up, and, grasping the Jew

by the throat, arraigned him as a prisoner of the Inquisition. The terrified wretch, falling on his knees, vociferated, "My cock,—my cock,—my cock! oh! I am undone!" Then, grasping my knees, "I am no Jew,—my son, Manasseh-ben-Solomon, is a Christian; you will not betray him, you will not betray *me*,—me who have saved your life. Manasseh,—I mean Antonio,—Rebekah,—no, Maria, help me to hold him. Oh God of Abraham, my cock, and my sacrifice of expiation, and this maniac to burst on the recesses of our privacy, to tear open the veil of the tabernacle!"—"Shut the tabernacle," said Rebekah, the old domestic whom I have before mentioned; "yea, shut the tabernacle, and close up the veils thereof, for behold there be men knocking at the door,—men who are children of Belial, and they knock with staff and stone; and, verily, they are about to break in the door, and demolish the carved work thereof with axes and hammers."—"Thou liest," said the Jew,

in much perturbation: "there is no carved work thereabout, nor dare they break it down with axes and hammers; peradventure it is but an assault of the children of Belial, in their rioting and drunkenness. I pray thee, Rebekah, to watch the door, and keep off the sons of Belial, even the sons of the mighty of the sinful city—the city of Madrid, while I remove this blaspheming carrion, who struggleth with me, —yea, struggleth mightily," (and struggle I did mightily). But, as I struggled, the knocks at the door became louder and stronger; and, as I was carried off, the Jew continued to repeat, "Set thy face against them, Rebekah; yea, set thy face like a flint." As he retired, Rebekah exclaimed, "Behold I have set my back against them, for my face now availeth not. My back is that which I will oppose, and verily I shall prevail."—"I pray thee, Rebekah," cried the Jew, "oppose thy FACE unto them, and verily that shall prevail. Try not the adversary with thy back, but

oppose thy face unto them; and behold, if they are men, they shall flee, even though they were a thousand, at the rebuke of one. I pray thee try thy face once more, Rebekah, while I send this scape-goat into the wilderness. Surely thy face is enough to drive away those who knocked by night at the door of that house in Gibeah, in the matter of the wife of the Benjamite." The knocking all this time increased. "Behold my back is broken," cried Rebekah, giving up her watch and ward, "for, of a verity, the weapons of the mighty do smite the lintels and door-posts; and mine arms are not steel, neither are my ribs iron, and behold I fail,—yea, I fail, and fall backwards into the hands of the uncircumcised." And so saying, she fell backwards as the door gave way, and fell not, as she feared, into the hands of the uncircumcised, but into those of two of her countrymen, who, it appeared, had some extraordinary reason for this late visit and forcible entrance.

"The Jew, apprized who they were, quitted me, after securing the door, and sat up the greater part of the night, in earnest conversation with his visitors. Whatever was their subject, it left traces of the most intense anxiety on the countenance of the Jew the next morning. He went out early, did not return till a late hour, and then hastened to the room I occupied, and expressed the utmost delight at finding me sane and composed. Candles were placed on the table, Rebekah dismissed, the door secured, and the Jew, after taking many uneasy turns about the narrow apartment, and often clearing his throat, at length sat down, and ventured to entrust me with the cause of his perturbation, in which, with the fatal consciousness of the unhappy, I already began to feel *I* must have a share. He told me, that though the report of my death, so universally credited through Madrid, had at first set his mind at ease, there was now a wild story, which, with all its false-

hood and impossibility, might, in its circulation, menace us with the most fearful consequences. He asked me, was it possible I could have been so imprudent as to expose myself to view on the day of that horrible execution? and when I confessed that I had stood at a window, and had involuntarily uttered cries that I feared might have reached some ears, he wrung his hands, and a sweat of consternation burst out on his pallid features. When he recovered himself, he told me it was universally believed that my spectre had appeared on that terrible occasion,—that I had been seen hovering in the air, to witness the sufferings of the dying wretch,—and that my voice had been heard summoning him to his eternal doom. He added, that this story, possessing all the credibility of superstition, was now repeated by a thousand mouths; and whatever contempt might be attached to its absurdity, it would infallibly operate as a hint to the restless vigilance, and unrelaxing

industry of the holy office, and might ultimately lead to my discovery. He therefore was about to disclose to me a secret, the knowledge of which would enable me to remain in perfect security even in the centre of Madrid, until some means might be devised of effecting my escape, and procuring me the means of subsistence in some Protestant country, beyond the reach of the Inquisition.

"As he was about to disclose this secret on which the safety of both depended, and which I bent in speechless agony to hear, a knock was heard at the door, very unlike the knocks of the preceding night. It was single, solemn, peremptory,—and followed by a demand to open the doors of the house in the name of the most holy Inquisition. At these terrible words, the wretched Jew flung himself on his knees, blew out the candles, called on the names of the twelve patriarchs, and slipped a large rosary on his arm, in less time than it is possible to conceive any human frame could go

through such a variety of movements. The knock was repeated,—I stood paralyzed; but the Jew, springing on his feet, raised one of the boards of the floor in a moment, and, with a motion between convulsion and instinct, pointed to me to descend. I did so, and found myself in a moment in darkness and in safety.

"I had descended but a few steps, on the last of which I stood trembling, when the officers of the Inquisition entered the room, and stalked over the very board that concealed me. I could hear every word that passed. "Don Fernan," said an officer to the Jew, who re-entered with them, after respectfully opening the door, "why were we not admitted sooner?"—"Holy Father," said the trembling Jew, "my only domestic, Maria, is old and deaf, the youth my son is in his bed, and I was myself engaged in my devotions."—"It seems you can perform them in the dark," said another, pointing to the candles, which the Jew was re-lighting.—

"When the eye of God is on me, most reverend fathers, I am never in darkness." —"The eye of God *is* on you," said the officer, sternly seating himself; "and so is another eye, to which he has deputed the sleepless vigilance and resistless penetration of his own,—the eye of the holy office. Don Fernan di Nunez," the name by which the Jew went, "you are not ignorant of the indulgence extended by the church, to those who have renounced the errors of that accursed and misbelieving race from which you are descended, but you must be also aware of its incessant vigilance being directed towards such individuals, from the suspicion necessarily attached to their doubtful conversion, and possible relapse. We know that the black blood of Grenada flowed in the tainted veins of your ancestry, and that not more than four centuries have elapsed, since your forefathers trampled on that cross before which you are now prostrate. You are an old man, Don Fernan, but not an *old*

Christian; and, under these circumstances, it behoves the holy office to have a watchful scrutiny over your conduct."

" The unfortunate Jew, invoking all the saints, protested he would feel the strictest scrutiny with which the holy office might honour him, as a ground of obligation and a matter of thanksgiving,—renouncing at the same time the creed of his race in terms of such exaggeration and vehemence, as made me tremble for his probable sincerity in any creed, and his fidelity to me. The officers of the Inquisition, taking little notice of his protestations, went on to inform him of the object of their visit. They stated that a wild and incredible tale of the spectre of a deceased prisoner of the Inquisition having been seen hovering in the air near his house, had suggested to the wisdom of the holy office, that the living individual might be concealed within its walls.

" I could not see the trepidation of the Jew, but I could feel the vibration of the

boards on which he stood communicated to the steps that supported me. In a choaked and tremulous voice, he implored the officers to search every apartment of his house, and to raze it to the ground, and inter him under its dust, if aught were found in it which a faithful and orthodox son of the church might not harbour. "That shall doubtless be done," said the officer, taking him at his word with the utmost *sang froid;* "but, in the mean time, suffer me to apprize you, Don Fernan, of the peril you incur, if at any future time, however remote, it shall be discovered that you harboured or aided in concealing a prisoner of the Inquisition, and an enemy of the holy church,—the very first and lightest part of that penalty will be your dwelling being razed to the ground." The Inquisitor raised his voice, and paused with emphatic deliberation between every clause of the following sentences, measuring as it were the effect of his blows on the increasing terror of his

auditor. "You will be conveyed to our prison, under the suspected character of a relapsed Jew. Your son will be committed to a convent, to remove him from the pestilential influence of your presence;—and your whole property shall be confiscated, to the last stone in your walls, the last garment on your person, and the last denier in your purse.

"The poor Jew, who had marked the gradations of his fear by groans more audible and prolonged at the end of every tremendous denunciatory clause, at the mention of confiscation so total and desolating, lost all self-possession, and, ejaculating—"Oh Father Abraham, and all the holy prophets!"—fell, as I conjectured from the sound, prostrate on the floor. I gave myself up for lost. Exclusive of his pusillanimity, the words he had uttered were enough to betray him to the officers of the Inquisition; and, without a moment's hesitation between the danger of falling into their hands, and plunging into the dark-

ness of the recess into which I had descended, I staggered down a few remaining steps, and attempted to feel my way along a passage, in which they seemed to terminate.

CHAPTER XIII.

There sat a spirit in the vault,
In shape, in hue, in lineaments, like life.
SOUTHEY'S THALABA.

"I AM convinced, that, had the passage been as long and intricate as any that ever an antiquarian pursued to discover the tomb of Cheops in the Pyramids, I would have rushed on in the blindness of my desperation, till famine or exhaustion had compelled me to pause. But I had no such peril to encounter,—the floor of the passage was smooth, and the walls were

matted, and though I proceeded in darkness, I proceeded in safety; and provided my progress removed me far enough from the pursuit or discovery of the Inquisition, I scarcely cared how it might terminate.

"Amid this temporary magnanimity of despair, this state of mind which unites the extremes of courage and pusillanimity, I saw a faint light. Faint it was, but it was distinct,—I saw clearly it was light. Great God! what a revulsion in my blood and heart, in all my physical and mental feelings, did this sun of my world of darkness create! I venture to say, that my speed in approaching it was in the proportion of one hundred steps to one, compared to my crawling progress in the preceding darkness. As I approached, I could discover that the light gleamed through the broad crevices of a door, which, disjointed by subterranean damps, gave me as full a view of the apartment within, as if it were opened to

me by the inmate. Through one of these crevices, before which I knelt in a mixture of exhaustion and curiosity, I could reconnoitre the whole of the interior.

"It was a large apartment, hung with dark-coloured baize within four feet of the floor, and this intermediate part was thickly matted, probably to intercept the subterranean damps. In the centre of the room stood a table covered with black cloth; it supported an iron lamp of an antique and singular form, by whose light I had been directed, and was now enabled to descry furniture that appeared sufficiently extraordinary. There were, amid maps and globes, several instruments, of which my ignorance did not permit me then to know the use,—some, I have since learned, were anatomical; there was an electrifying machine, and a curious *model of a rack* in ivory; there were few books, but several scrolls of parchment, inscribed with

large characters in red and ochre-coloured ink; and around the room were placed *four* skeletons, not in cases, but in a kind of upright coffin, that gave their bony emptiness a kind of ghastly and imperative prominence, as if they were the real and rightful tenants of that singular apartment. Interspersed between them were the stuffed figures of animals I knew not then the names of,—an alligator,—some gigantic bones, which I took for those of Sampson, but which turned out to be fragments of those of the Mammoth,—and antlers, which in my terror I believed to be those of the devil, but afterwards learned to be those of an Elk. Then I saw figures smaller, but not less horrible,—human and brute abortions, in all their states of anomalous and deformed construction, not preserved in spirits, but standing in the ghastly nakedness of their white diminutive bones; these I conceived to be the attendant imps of some infer-

nal ceremony, which the grand wizard, who now burst on my sight, was to preside over.

"At the end of the table sat an old man, wrapped in a long robe; his head was covered with a black velvet cap, with a broad border of furs, his spectacles were of such a size as almost to hide his face, and he turned over some scrolls of parchment with an anxious and trembling hand; then seizing a scull that lay on the table, and grasping it in fingers hardly less bony, and not less yellow, seemed to apostrophize it in the most earnest manner. All my personal fears were lost in the thought of my being the involuntary witness of some infernal orgie. I was still kneeling at the door, when my long suspended respiration burst forth in a groan, which reached the figure seated at the table in a moment. Habitual vigilance supplied all the defects of age on the part of the listener. It was but the sensation of a moment to feel the door thrown open, my arm seized by an

arm powerful though withered by age, and myself, as I thought, in the talons of a demon.

" The door was closed and bolted. An awful figure stood over me, (for I had fallen on the floor), and thundered out, " Who art thou, and why art thou here?" I knew not what to answer, and gazed with a fixed and speechless look on the skeletons and the other furniture of this terrible vault. " Hold," said the voice, " if thou art indeed exhausted, and needest refreshment, drink of this cup, and thou shalt be refreshed as with wine; verily, it shall come into thy bowels as water, and as oil into thy bones,"—and as he spoke he offered to me a cup with some liquid in it. I repelled him and his drink, which I had not a doubt was some magical drug, with horror unutterable; and losing all other fears in the overwhelming one of becoming a slave of Satan, and a victim of one of his agents, as I believed this extraordinary figure, I called on the name of

the Saviour and the saints, and, crossing myself at every sentence, exclaimed, "No, tempter, keep your infernal potions for the leprous lips of your imps, or swallow them yourself. I have but this moment escaped from the hands of the Inquisition, and a million times rather would I return and yield myself their victim, than consent to become yours,—your tender-mercies are the only cruelties I dread. Even in the prison of the holy office, where the faggots appeared to be lit before my eyes, and the chain already fastened round my body to bind it to the stake, I was sustained by a power that enabled me to embrace objects so terrible to nature, sooner than escape them at the price of my salvation. The choice was offered me, and I made my election,—and so would I do were it to be offered a thousand times, though the last were at the stake, and the fire already kindling."

Here the Spaniard paused in some agitation. In the enthusiasm of his narra-

tion, he had in some degree disclosed that secret which he had declared was incommunicable, except in confessing to a priest. Melmoth, who, from the narrative of Stanton, had been prepared to suspect something of this, did not think prudent to press him for a farther disclosure, and waited in silence till his emotion had subsided, without remark or question. Monçada at length resumed his narrative.

"While I was speaking, the old man viewed me with a look of calm surprise, that made me ashamed of my fears, even before I had ceased to utter them. "What!" said he at length, fixing apparently on some expressions that struck him, "art thou escaped from the arm that dealeth its blow in darkness, even the arm of the Inquisition? Art thou that Nazarene youth who sought refuge in the house of our brother Solomon, the son of Hilkiah, who is called Fernan Nunez by the idolaters in this land of his captivity? Verily I trusted thou shouldst this night

have eat of my bread, and drank of my cup, and been unto me as a scribe, for our brother Solomon testified concerning thee, saying, His pen is even as the pen of a ready writer."

"I gazed at him in astonishment. Some vague recollections of Solomon's being about to disclose some safe and secret retreat wandered over my mind; and, while trembling at the singular apartment in which we were seated, and the employment in which he seemed engaged, I yet felt a hope hover about my heart, which his knowledge of my situation appeared to justify. "Sit down," said he, observing with compassion that I was sinking alike under the exhaustion of fatigue and the distraction of terror; "sit down, and eat a morsel of bread, and drink a cup of wine, and comfort thine heart, for thou seemest to be as one who hath escaped from the snare of the fowler, and from the dart of the hunter." I obeyed him involuntarily. I needed the refreshment he

offered, and was about to partake of it, when an irresistible feeling of repugnance and horror overcame me; and, as I thrust away the food he offered me, I pointed to the objects around me as the cause of my reluctance. He looked round for a moment, as doubting whether objects so familiar to him, could be repulsive to a stranger, and then shaking his head, "Thou art a fool," said he, "but thou art a Nazarene, and I pity thee; verily, those who had the teaching of thy youth, not only have shut the book of knowledge to thee, but have forgot to open it for themselves. Were not thy masters, the Jesuits, masters also of the healing art, and art thou not acquainted with the sight of its ordinary implements? Eat, I pray thee, and be satisfied that none of these will hurt thee. Yonder dead bones cannot weigh out or withhold thy food; nor can they bind thy joints, or strain them with iron, or rend them with steel, as would the living arms that were stretch-

ed forth to seize thee as their prey. And, as the Lord of hosts liveth, their prey wouldst thou have been, and a prey unto their iron and steel, were it not for the shelter of the roof of Adonijah to-night."

"I took some of the food he offered me, crossing myself at every mouthful, and drank the wine, which the feverish thirst of terror and anxiety made me swallow like water, but not without an internal prayer that it might not be converted into some deleterious and diabolical poison. The Jew Adonijah observed me with increasing compassion and contempt.—"What," said he, "appals thee? Were I possessed of the powers the superstition of thy sect ascribes to me, might I not make thee a banquet for fiends, instead of offering thee food? Might I not bring from the caverns of the earth the voices of those that "peep and mutter," instead of speaking unto thee with the voice of man? Thou art in my power, yet have I no power or will to hurt thee. And dost

thou, who art escaped from the dungeons of the Inquisition, look as one that feareth on the things that thou seest around thee, the furniture of the cell of a secluded leach? Within this apartment I have passed the term of sixty years, and dost thou shudder to visit it for a moment? These be the skeletons of bodies, but in the den thou hast escaped from were the skeletons of perished souls. Here are relics of the wrecks or the caprices of nature, but thou art come from where the cruelty of man, permanent and persevering, unrelenting and unmitigated, hath never failed to leave the proofs of its power in abortive intellects, crippled frames, distorted creeds, and ossified hearts. Moreover, there are around thee parchments and charts scrawled as it were with the blood of man, but, were it even so, could a thousand such volumes cause such terror to the human eye, as a page of the history of thy prison, written as it is in blood,

drawn, not from the frozen veins of the dead, but from the bursting hearts of the living. Eat, Nazarene, there is no poison in thy food,—drink, there is no drug in thy cup. Darest thou promise thyself that in the prison of the Inquisition, or even in the cells of the Jesuits? Eat and drink without fear in the vault, even in the vault of Adonijah the Jew. If thou daredst to have done so in the dwellings of the Nazarenes, I had never beheld thee here. Hast thou fed?" he added, and I bowed. "Hast thou drank of the cup I gave thee?" my torturing thirst returned, and I gave him back the cup. He smiled, but the smile of age,—the smile of lips over which more than an hundred years have passed, has an expression more repulsive and hideous than can be deemed; it is never the smile of pleasure,—it is a *frown of the mouth*, and I shrunk before its grim wrinkles, as the Jew Adonijah added, "If thou hast eat and drank, it is

time for thee to rest. Come to thy bed, it may be harder than they have given thee in thy prison, but behold it shall be safer. Come and rest thee there, it may be that the adversary and the enemy shall not there find thee out."

"I followed him through passages so devious and intricate, that, bewildered as I was with the events of the night, they forced on my memory the well-known fact, that in Madrid the Jews have subterranean passages to each other's habitations, which have hitherto baffled all the industry of the Inquisition. I slept that night, or rather day, (for the sun had risen), on a pallet laid on the floor of a room, small, lofty, and matted half-way up the walls. One narrow and grated window admitted the light of the sun, that arose after that eventful night; and amid the sweet sound of bells, and the still sweeter of human life, awake and in motion around me, I sunk into a slumber

that was unbroken even by a dream, till the day was closing; or, in the language of Adonijah, "till the shadows of the evening were upon the face of all the earth."

CHAPTER XIV.

Unde iratos deos timent, qui sic propitios merentur?

SENECA.

"WHEN I awoke, he was standing by my pallet. "Arise," said he, "eat and drink, that thy strength may return unto thee." He pointed to a small table as he spoke, which was covered with food of the plainest kind, and dressed with the utmost simplicity. Yet he seemed to think an apology was necessary for the indulgence of this temperate fare. "I myself," said

he, "eat not the flesh of any animal, save on the new moons and the feasts, yet the days of the years of my life have been one hundred and seven; sixty of which have been passed in the chamber where thou sawest me. Rarely do I ascend to the upper chamber of this house, save on occasions like this, or peradventure to pray, with my window open towards the east, for the turning away wrath from Jacob, and the turning again the captivity of Zion. Well saith the ethnic leach,

"Aer exclusus confert ad longevitatem."

"Such hath been my life, as I tell thee. The light of heaven hath been hidden from mine eyes, and the voice of man is as the voice of a stranger in mine ears, save those of some of mine own nation, who weep for the affliction of Israel; yet the silver cord is not loosed, nor the golden bowl broken; and though mine eye be waxing dim, my natural force is not abated." (As he spoke,

my eyes hung in reverence on the hoary majesty of his patriarchal figure, and I felt as if I beheld an embodied representation of the old law in all its stern simplicity—the unbending grandeur, and primeval antiquity.) "Hast thou eaten, and art full? Arise, then, and follow me."

"We descended to the vault, where I found the lamp was always burning. And Adonijah, pointing to the parchments that lay on the table, said, "This is the matter wherein I need thy help; the collection and transcription whereof hath been the labour of more than half a life, prolonged beyond the bounds allotted to mortality; but," pointing to his sunk and blood-shot eyes, "those that look out of the windows begin to be darkened, and I feel that I need help from the quick hand and clear eye of youth. Wherefore, it being certified unto me by our brother, that thou wert a youth who couldst handle the pen of a scribe, and, moreover, wast in need of a city of refuge, and a strong wall of de-

fence, against the laying-in-wait of thy brethren round about thee, I was willing that thou shouldst come under my roof, and eat of such things as I set before thee, and such as thy soul desireth, excepting only the abominable things forbidden in the law of the prophet; and shouldst, moreover, receive wages as an hired servant."

"You will perhaps smile, Sir; but even in my wretched situation, I felt a slight but painful flush tinge my cheek, at the thought of a Christian, and a peer of Spain, becoming the amanuensis of a Jew for hire. Adonijah continued, "Then, when my task is completed, then will I be gathered to my fathers, trusting surely in the Hope of Israel, that mine eyes shall "behold the King in his beauty,—they shall see the land that is very far off." And peradventure," he added, in a voice that grief rendered solemn, mellow, and tremulous, "peradventure there shall I meet in bliss, those with whom I parted in woe—even

thou, Zachariah, the son of my loins, and thou, Leah, the wife of my bosom;" apostrophizing two of the silent skeletons that stood near. "And in the presence of the God of our fathers, the redeemed of Zion shall meet—and meet as those who are to part no more for ever and ever." At these words, he closed his eyes, lifted up his hands, and appeared to be absorbed in mental prayer. Grief had perhaps subdued my prejudices—it had certainly softened my heart—and at this moment I half-believed that a Jew might find entrance and adoption amid the family and fold of the blessed. This sentiment operated on my human sympathies, and I inquired, with unfeigned anxiety, after the fate of Solomon the Jew, whose misfortune in harbouring me had exposed him to the visit of the Inquisitors. "Be at peace," said Adonijah, waving his bony and wrinkled hand, as if dismissing a subject below his present feelings, "our brother Solomon is in no peril of death; neither shall

his goods be taken for a spoil. If our adversaries are mighty in power, so are we mighty also to deal with them by our wealth or our wisdom. Thy flight they never can trace, thy existence on the face of the earth shall also be unknown to them, so thou wilt hearken to me, and heed my words."

"I could not speak, but my expression of mute and imploring anxiety spoke for me. "Thou didst use words," said Adonijah, "last night, whereof, though I remember not all the purport, the sound yet maketh mine ears to tingle; even mine, which have not vibrated to such sounds for four times the space of thy youthful years. Thou saidst thou wert beset by a power that tempted thee to renounce the Most High, whom Jew and Christian alike profess to worship; and that thou didst declare, that were the fires kindled around thee, thou wouldst spit at the tempter, and trample on the offer, though thy foot pressed the coal which the sons of Dominick

were lighting beneath its naked sole."—"I did," I cried, "I did—and I would—So help me God in mine extremity."

"Adonijah paused for a moment, as if considering whether this were a burst of passion, or a proof of mental energy. He seemed at last inclined to believe it the latter, though all men of far-advanced age are apt to distrust any marks of emotion as a demonstration rather of weakness than of sincerity. "Then," said he, after a long and solemn pause, "then thou shalt know the secret that hath been a burthen to the soul of Adonijah, even as his hopeless solitude is a burthen to the soul of him who traverseth the desert, none accompanying him with step, or cheering him with voice. From my youth upward, even until now, have I laboured, and behold the time of my deliverance is at hand; yea, and shall be accomplished speedily.

"In the days of my childhood, a rumour reached mine ears, even mine, of a being sent abroad on the earth to tempt

Jew and Nazarene, and even the disciples of Mohammed, whose name is accursed in the mouth of our nation, with offers of deliverance at their utmost need and extremity, so they would do that which my lips dare not utter, even though there be no ear to receive it but thine. Thou shudderest—well, then, thou art sincere, at least, in thy faith of errors. I listened to the tale, and mine ears received it, even as the soul of the thirsty drinketh in rivers of water, for my mind was full of the vain fantasies of the Gentile fables, and I longed, in the perverseness of my spirit, to see, yea, and to consort with, yea, and to deal with, the evil one in his strength. Like our fathers in the wilderness, I despised angel's food, and lusted after forbidden meats, even the meats of the Egyptian sorcerers. And my presumption was rebuked as thou seest:—childless, wifeless, friendless, at the last period of an existence prolonged beyond the bounds of nature, am I now left, and, save thee alone, with-

out one to record its events. I will not trouble thee now with the tale of my eventful life, farther than to tell thee, that the skeletons thou tremblest to behold, were once clothed in flesh far fairer than thine. They are those of my wife and child, whose history thou must not now hear—but those of the two others thou must both hear and relate." And he pointed to the two other skeletons opposite, in their upright cases. "On my return to my country, even Spain, if a Jew can be said to have a country, I set myself down on this seat, and, lighted by this lamp, I took in my hand the pen of a scribe, and vowed by a vow, that this lamp should not expire, nor this seat be forsaken, nor this vault untenanted, until that the record is written in a book, and sealed as with the king's signet. But, behold, I was traced by those who are keen of scent, and quick of pursuit, even the sons of Dominick. And they seized me, and laid my feet fast in the bonds; but my writ-

ings they could not read, because they were traced in a character unknown to this idolatrous people. And behold, after a space they set me free, finding no cause of offence in me; and they bade me depart, and trouble them no more. Then vowed I a vow unto the God of Israel, who had delivered me from their thraldom, that none but he who could read these characters should ever transcribe them. Moreover, I prayed, and said, O Lord God of Israel! who knowest that we are the sheep of thy fold, and our enemies as wolves round about us, and as lions who roar for their evening prey, grant, that a Nazarene escaped from their hands, and fleeing unto us, even as a bird chased from her nest, may put to shame the weapons of the mighty, and laugh them to scorn. Grant also, Lord God of Jacob, that he may be exposed to the snare of the enemy, even as those of whom I have written, and that he may spit at it with his mouth, and spurn at it with his feet, and trample on

the ensnarer, even as they have trampled; and then shall my soul, even mine, have peace at the last. Thus I prayed—and my prayer was heard, for behold, *thou* art here."

"As I heard these words, a horrid foreboding, like a night-mare of the heart, hung heavily on me. I looked alternately at the withering speaker, and the hopeless task. To bear about that horrible secret inurned in my heart, was not that enough? but to be compelled to scatter its ashes abroad, and to rake into the dust of others for the same purpose of unhallowed exposure, revolted me beyond feeling and utterance. As my eye fell listlessly on the manuscripts, I saw they contained only *the Spanish language* written in *the Greek characters*—a mode of writing that, I easily conceived, must have been as unintelligible to the officers of the Inquisition, as the Hieroglyphics of the Egyptian priests. Their ignorance, sheltered by their pride, and that still more strongly

fortified by the impenetrable secresy attached to their most minute proceedings, made them hesitate to entrust to any one the circumstance of their being in possession of manuscript which they could not decypher. So they returned the papers to Adonijah, and, in his own language, "Behold, he abode in safety." But to me this was a task of horror unspeakable. I felt myself as an added link to the chain, the end of which, held by an invisible hand, was drawing me to perdition; and I was now to become the recorder of my own condemnation.

"As I turned over the leaves with a trembling hand, the towering form of Adonijah seemed dilated with preternatural emotion. "And what dost thou tremble at, child of the dust?" he exclaimed, "if thou hast been tempted, so have they—if thou hast resisted, so have they—if they are at rest, so shalt thou be. There is not a pang of soul or body thou hast undergone, or

canst undergo, that they have not suffered before thy birth was dreamt of. Boy, thy hand trembles over pages it is unworthy to touch, yet still I must employ thee, for I need thee. Miserable link of necessity, that binds together minds so uncongenial! I would that the ocean were my ink, and the rock my page, and mine arm, even mine, the pen that should write thereon letters that should last like those on the written mountains for ever and ever—even the mount of Sinai, and those that still bear the record, "Israel hath passed the flood *." As he spoke, I again turned over the manuscripts. "Does thy hand tremble still?" said Adonijah; "and dost

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* Written mountains, *i. e.* rocks inscribed with characters recordative of some remarkable event, are well known to every oriental traveller. I think it is in the notes of Dr Coke, on the book of Exodus, that I have met with the circumstance alluded to above. A rock near the Red Sea is said once to have borne the inscription, "Israel hath passed the flood."

thou still hesitate to record the story of those whose destiny a link, wondrous, invisible, and indissoluble, has bound to thine. Behold, there are those near thee, who, though they have no longer a tongue, speak to thee with that eloquence which is stronger than all the eloquence of living tongues. Behold, there are those around thee, whose mute and motionless arms of bone plead to thee as no arms of flesh ever pleaded. Behold, there are those who, being speechless, yet speak—who, being dead, are yet alive—who, though in the abyss of eternity, are yet around thee, and call on thee, as with a mortal voice. Hear them! —take the pen in thine hand, and write." I took the pen in my hand, but could not write a line. Adonijah, in a transport of ecstasy, snatching a skeleton from its receptacle, placed it before me. "Tell him thy story thyself, peradventure he will believe thee, and record it." And supporting the skeleton with one hand, he pointed with the other, as bleached and bony

as that of the dead, to the manuscript that lay before me.

"It was a night of storms in the world above us; and, far below the surface of the earth as we were, the murmur of the winds, sighing through the passages, came on my ear like the voices of the departed, —like the pleadings of the dead. Involuntarily I fixed my eye on the manuscript I was to copy, and never withdrew till I had finished its extraordinary contents.

Tale of the Indians.

"THERE is an island in the Indian sea, not many leagues from the mouth of the Hoogly, which, from the peculiarity of its situation and internal circumstances,

long remained unknown to Europeans, and unvisited by the natives of the contiguous islands, except on remarkable occasions. It is surrounded by shallows that render the approach of any vessel of weight impracticable, and fortified by rocks that threatened danger to the slight canoes of the natives, but it was rendered still more formidable by the terrors with which superstition had invested it. There was a tradition that the first temple to the black goddess Seeva *, had been erected there; and her hideous idol, with its collar of human sculls, forked tongues darting from its twenty serpent mouths, and seated on a matted coil of adders, had there first recieved the bloody homage of the mutilated limbs and immolated infants of her worshippers.

"The temple had been overthrown, and the island half depopulated, by an earthquake, that agitated all the shores of In-

* Vide Maurice's Indian Antiquities.

dia. It was rebuilt, however, by the zeal of the worshippers, who again began to re-visit the island, when a tufaun of fury unparalleled even in those fierce latitudes, burst over the devoted spot. The pagoda was burnt to ashes by the lightning; the inhabitants, their dwellings, and their plantations, swept away as with the besom of destruction, and not a trace of humanity, cultivation, or life, remained in the desolate isle. The devotees consulted their imagination for the cause of these calamities; and, while seated under the shade of their cocoa-trees they told their long strings of coloured beads, they ascribed it to the wrath of the goddess Seeva at the increasing popularity of the worship of Juggernaut. They asserted that her image had been seen ascending amid the blaze of lightning that consumed her shrine and blasted her worshippers as they clung to it for protection, and firmly believed she had withdrawn to some happier isle, where she might enjoy her feast

of flesh, and draught of blood, unmolested by the worship of a rival deity. So the island remained desolate, and without inhabitant for years.

"The crews of European vessels, assured by the natives that there was neither animal, or vegetable, or water, to be found on its surface, forbore to visit; and the Indian of other isles, as he passed it in his canoe, threw a glance of melancholy fear at its desolation, and flung something overboard to propitiate the wrath of Seeva.

"The island, thus left to itself, became vigorously luxuriant, as some neglected children improve in health and strength, while pampered darlings die under excessive nurture. Flowers bloomed, and foliage thickened, without a hand to pluck, a step to trace, or a lip to taste them, when some fishermen, (who had been driven by a strong current toward the isle, and worked with oar and sail in vain to avoid its dreaded shore), after making a

thousand prayers to propitiate Seeva, were compelled to approach within an oar's length of it; and, on their return in unexpected safety, reported they had heard sounds so exquisite, that some other goddess, milder than Seeva, must have fixed on that spot for her residence. The younger fishermen added to this account, that they had beheld a female figure of supernatural loveliness, glide and disappear amid the foliage which now luxuriantly overshadowed the rocks; and, in the spirit of Indian devotees, they hesitated not to call this delicious vision an incarnated emanation of Vishnu, in a lovelier form than ever he had appeared before,—at least far beyond that which he assumed, when he made one of his avatars in the figure of a tiger.

"The inhabitants of the islands, as superstitious as they were imaginative, deified the vision of the isles after their manner. The old devotees, while invoking her, stuck close to the bloody rites of Seeva and Ha-

ree, and muttered many a horrid vow over their beads, which they took care to render effectual by striking sharp reeds into their arms, and tinging every bead with blood as they spoke. The young women rowed their light canoes as near as they dared to the haunted isle, making vows to Camdeo*, and sending their paper vessels, lit with wax, and filled with flowers, towards its coast, where they hoped their darling deity was about to fix his residence. The young men also, at least those who were in love and fond of music, rowed close to the island to solicit the god Krishnoo †, to sanctify it by his presence; and not knowing what to offer to the deity, they sung their wild airs standing high on the prow of the canoe, and at last threw a figure of wax, with a kind of lyre in its hand, towards the shore of the desolate isle.

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* The Cupid of the Indian mythology.

† The Indian Apollo.

For many a night these canoes might be seen glancing past each other over the darkened sea, like *shooting stars of the deep*, with their lighted paper lanthorns, and their offerings of flowers and fruits, left by some trembling hand on the sands, or hung by a bolder one in baskets of cane on the rocks; and still the simple islanders felt joy and devotion united in this "voluntary humility." It was observed, however, that the worshippers departed with very different impressions of the object of their adoration. The women all clung to their oars in breathless admiration of the sweet sounds that issued from the isle; and when that ceased they departed, murmuring over in their huts those "notes angelical," to which their own language furnished no appropriate sounds. The men rested long on their oars, to catch a glimpse of the form which, by the report of the fishermen, wandered there; and, when disappointed, they rowed home sadly.

"Gradually the isle lost its bad character for terror; and in spite of some old devotees, who told their blood-discoloured beads, and talked of Seeva and Haree, and even held burning splinters of wood to their scorched hands, and stuck sharp pieces of iron, which they had purchased or stolen from the crews of European vessels, in the most fleshy and sensitive parts of their bodies,—and, moreover, talked of suspending themselves from trees with the head downwards, till they were consumed by insects, or calcined by the sun, or rendered delirious by their position,—in spite of all this, which must have been very affecting, the young people went on their own way,—the girls offering their wreaths to Camdeo, and the youths invoking Krishnoo, till the devotees, in despair, vowed to visit this accursed island, which had set every body mad, and find out how the unknown deity was to be recognised and propitiated; and whether

flowers, and fruits, and love-vows, and the beatings of young hearts, were to be substituted for the orthodox and legitimate offering of nails grown into the hands till they appeared through their backs, and *setons* of ropes inserted into the sides, on which the religionist danced his dance of agony, till the ropes or his patience failed. In a word, they were determined to find out what this deity was, who demanded no suffering from her worshippers,—and they fulfilled their resolution in a manner worthy of their purpose.

"One hundred and forty beings, crippled by the austerities of their religion, unable to manage sail or oar, embarked in a canoe to reach what they called the accursed isle. The natives, intoxicated with the belief of their sanctity, stripped themselves naked, to push their boat through the surf, and then, making their *salams*, implored them to use oars at least. The devotees, all too intent on their beads, and too well satisfied of their importance

in the eyes of their favourite deities, to admit a doubt of their safety, set off in triumph,—and the consequence may be easily conjectured. The boat soon filled and sunk, and the crew perished without a single sigh of lamentation, except that they had not feasted the alligators in the sacred waters of the Ganges, or perished at least under the shadow of the domes of the *holy city* of Benares, in either of which cases their salvation must have been unquestionable.

" This circumstance, apparently so untoward, operated favourably on the popularity of the new worship. The old system lost ground every day. Hands, instead of being scorched over the fire, were employed only in gathering flowers. Nails (with which it was the custom of the devotees to lard their persons) actually fell in price ; and a man might sit at his ease on his hams with as safe a conscience, and as fair a character, as if fourscore of them occupied the interval between. On

the other hand, fruits were every day scattered on the shores of the favourite isle; flowers, too, blushed on its rocks, in all the dazzling luxuriance of colouring with which the Flora of the East delights to array herself. There was that brilliant and superb lily, which, to this day, illustrates the comparison between it and Solomon, who, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of them. There was the rose unfolding its "paradise of leaves," and the scarlet blossom of the bombex, which an English traveller has voluptuously described as banqueting the eye with "its mass of vegetable splendour" unparalleled. And the female votarists at last began to imitate some of "those sounds and sweet airs" that every breeze seemed to waft to their ears, with increasing strength of melody, as they floated in their canoes round this isle of enchantment.

"At length one circumstance occurred that put its sanctity of character, and that of its inmate, out of all doubt. A young

Indian who had in vain offered to his beloved the mystical bouquet, in which the arrangement of the flowers is made to express love, rowed his canoe to the island, to learn his fate from its supposed inhabitant; and as he rowed, composed a song, which expressed that his mistress despised him, as if he were a Paria, but that he would love her though he were descended from the head of Brahma;—that her skin was more polished than the marble steps by which you descend to the tank of a Rajah, and her eyes brighter than any whose glances were watched by presumptuous strangers through the rents of the embroidered purdah * of a Nawaub;—that she was loftier in his eyes than the black pagoda of Juggernaut, and more brilliant than the trident of the temple of Mahadeva, when it sparkled in the beams of the moon. And as both these objects were

* The curtain behind which women are concealed.

visible to his eyes from the shore, as he rowed on in the soft and glorious serenity of an Indian night, no wonder they found a place in his verse. Finally, he promised, that if she was propitious to his suit, he would build her a hut, raised four feet above the ground to avoid the serpents;—that her dwelling should be overshadowed by the boughs of the tamarind; and that while she slept, he would drive the musquitoes from her with a fan, composed of the leaves of the first flowers which she accepted as a testimony of his passion.

" It so happened, that the same night, the young female, whose reserve had been the result of any thing but indifference, attended by two of her companions, rowed her canoe to the same spot, with the view of discovering whether the vows of her lover were sincere. They arrived about the same time; and though it was now twilight, and the superstition of these timid beings gave a darker tinge to the

shadows that surrounded them, they ventured to land; and, bearing their baskets of flowers in trembling hands, advanced to hang them on the ruins of the pagoda, amid which it was presumed the new goddess had fixed her abode. They proceeded, not without difficulty, through thickets of flowers that had sprung spontaneously in the uncultivated soil—not without fear that a tiger might spring on them at every step, till they recollected that those animals chose generally the large jungles for their retreat, and seldom harboured amid flowers. Still less was the alligator to be dreaded, amid the narrow streams that they could cross without tinging their ancles with its pure water. The tamarind, the cocoa, and the palm-tree, shed their blossoms, and exhaled their odours, and waved their leaves, over the head of the trembling votarist as she approached the ruin of the pagoda. It had been a massive square building, erected amid

rocks, that, by a caprice of nature not uncommon in the Indian isles, occupied its centre, and appeared the consequence of some volcanic explosion. The earthquake that had overthrown it, had mingled the rocks and ruins together in a shapeless and deformed mass, which seemed to bear alike the traces of the impotence of art and nature, when prostrated by the power that has formed and can annihilate both. There were pillars, wrought with singular characters, heaped amid stones that bore no impress but that of some fearful and violent action of nature, that seemed to say, Mortals, write your lines with the chisel, I write my hieroglyphics in fire. There were the disjointed piles of stones carved into the form of snakes, on which the hideous idol of Seeva had once been seated; and close to them the rose was bursting through the earth which occupied the fissures of the rock, as if nature preached a milder theology, and deputed her darling

flower as her missionary to her children. The idol itself had fallen, and lay in fragments. The horrid mouth was still visible, into which human hearts had been formerly inserted. But now, the beautiful peacocks, with their rain-bow trains and arched necks, were feeding their young amid the branches of the tamarind that overhung the blackened fragments. The young Indians advanced with diminished fear, for there was neither sight or sound to inspire the fear that attends the approach to the presence of a spiritual being —all was calm, still, and dark. Yet their feet trod with involuntary lightness as they advanced to these ruins, which combined the devastations of nature with those of the human passions, perhaps more bloody and wild than the former. Near the ruins there had formerly been a tank, as is usual, near the pagodas, both for the purposes of refreshment and purification; but the steps were now broken, and the water was

stagnated. The young Indians, however, took up a few drops, invoked the "goddess of the isle," and approached the only remaining arch. The exterior front of this building had been constructed of stone, but its interior had been hollowed out of the rock; and its recesses resembled, in some degree, those in the island of Elephanta. There were monstrous figures carved in stone, some adhering to the rock, others detached from it, all frowning in their shapeless and gigantic hideousness, and giving to the eye of superstition the terrible representation of "*gods of stone*."

"Two of the young votarists, who were distinguished for their courage, advanced and performed a kind of wild dance before the ruins of the ancient gods, as they called them, and invoked (as they might) the new resident of the isle to be propitious to the vows of their companion, who advanced to hang

her wreath of flowers round the broken remains of an idol half-defaced and half-hidden among the fragments of stone, but clustered over with that rich vegetation which seems, in oriental countries, to announce the eternal triumph of nature amid the ruins of art. Every year renews the rose, but what year shall see a pyramid rebuilt? As the young Indian hung her wreath on the shapeless stone, a voice murmured, "There is a *withered* flower there."—"Yes—yes—there is," answered the votarist, "and that withered flower is an emblem of my heart. I have cherished many roses, but suffered one to wither that was the sweetest to me of all the wreath. Wilt thou revive him for me, unknown goddess, and my wreath shall no longer be a dishonour to thy shrine?"—"Wilt *thou* revive the rose by placing it in the warmth of thy bosom," said the young lover, appearing from behind the fragments of rock and ruin that had sheltered him, and from

which he had uttered his oracular reply, and listened with delight to the emblematical but intelligible language of his beloved. "Wilt thou revive the rose?" he asked, in the triumph of love, as he clasped her to his bosom. The young Indian, yielding at once to love and superstition, seemed half-melting in his embrace, when, in a moment, she uttered a wild shriek, repelled him with all her strength, and crouched in an uncouth posture of fear, while she pointed with one quivering hand to a figure that appeared, at that moment, in the perspective of that tumultuous and indefinite heap of stone. The lover, unalarmed by the shriek of his mistress, was advancing to catch her in his arms, when his eye fell on the object that had struck hers, and he sunk on his face to the earth, in mute adoration.

"The form was that of a female, but such as they had never before beheld, for her skin was perfectly white, (at least in

their eyes, who had never seen any but the dark-red tint of the natives of the Bengalese islands). Her drapery (as well as they could see) consisted only of flowers, whose rich colours and fantastic grouping harmonized well with the peacock's feathers twined among them, and altogether composed a feathery fan of wild drapery, which, in truth, beseemed an "island goddess." Her long hair, of a colour they had never beheld before, pale auburn, flowed to her feet, and was fantastically entwined with the flowers and the feathers that formed her dress. On her head was a coronal of shells, of hue and lustre unknown except in the Indian seas—the purple and the green vied with the amethyst, and the emerald. On her white bare shoulder a loxia was perched, and round her neck was hung a string of their pearl—like eggs, so pure and pellucid, that the first sovereign in Europe might have exchanged her richest necklace of pearls

for them. Her arms and feet were perfectly bare, and her step had a goddess-like rapidity and lightness, that affected the imagination of the Indians as much as the extraordinary colour of her skin and hair. The young lovers sunk in awe before this vision as it passed before their eyes. While they prostrated themselves, a delicious sound trembled on their ears. The beautiful vision spoke to them, but it was in a language they did not understand; and this confirming their belief that it was the language of the gods, they prostrated themselves to her again. At that moment, the loxia, springing from her shoulder, came fluttering towards them. "He is going to seek for fire-flies to light his cell *," said the Indians to each other. But the bird, who, with an intelligence

* From the fire-flies being so often found in the nest of the loxia, the Indians imagine he illuminates his nest with them. It is more likely they are the food of his young.

peculiar to his species, understood and adopted the predilection of the fair being he belonged to, for the fresh flowers in which he saw her arrayed every day, darted at the withered rose-bud in the wreath of the young Indian; and, striking his slender beak through it, laid it at her feet. The omen was interpreted auspiciously by the lovers, and, bending once more to the earth, they rowed back to their island, but no longer in separate canoes. The lover steered that of his mistress, while she sat beside him in silence; and the young people who accompanied them chaunted verses in praise of the *white* goddess, and the island sacred to her and to lovers.

CHAPTER XV.

But tell me to what saint, I pray,
What martyr, or what angel bright,
Is dedicate this holy day,
Which brings you here so gaily dight?

Dost thou not, simple Palmer, know,
What every child can tell thee here?—
Nor saint nor angel claims this show,
But the bright season of the year.

QUEEN-HOO HALL, BY STRUTT.

"THE sole and beautiful inmate of the isle, though disturbed at the appearance of her worshippers, soon recovered her tranquillity. She could not be conscious of fear, for nothing of that world in which she lived had ever borne a hostile appearance to her. The sun and the shade—the

flowers and foliage—the tamarinds and figs that prolonged her delightful existence—the water that she drank, wondering at the beautiful being who seemed to drink whenever she did—the peacocks, who spread out their rich and radiant plumage the moment they beheld her—and the loxia, who perched on her shoulder and hand as she walked, and answered her sweet voice with imitative chirpings—all these were her friends, and she knew none but these.

"The human forms that sometimes approached the island, caused her a slight emotion; but it was rather that of curiosity than alarm; and their gestures were so expressive of reverence and mildness, their offerings of flowers, in which she delighted, so acceptable, and their visits so silent and peaceful, that she saw them without reluctance, and only wondered, as they rowed away, how they could move on the water in safety; and how creatures so dark, and with features so unattractive,

happened to *grow* amid the beautiful flowers they presented to her as the productions of their abode. The elements might be supposed to have impressed her imagination with some terrible ideas; but the periodical regularity of these phœnomena, in the climate she inhabited, divested them of their terrors to one who had been accustomed to them, as to the alternation of night and day—who could not remember the fearful impression of the first, and, above all, who had never heard any terror of them expressed *by another*, —perhaps the primitive cause of fear in most minds. Pain she had never felt—of death she had no idea—how, then, could she become acquainted with fear?

"When a north-wester, as it is termed, visited the island, with all its terrific accompaniments of midnight darkness, clouds of suffocating dust, and thunders like the trumpet of doom, she stood amid the leafy colonnades of the banyan-tree, ignorant of her danger, watching the cowering wings

and drooping heads of the birds, and the ludicrous terror of the monkies, as they skipt from branch to branch with their young. When the lightning struck a tree, she gazed as a child would on a fire-work played off for its amusement; but the next day she wept, when she saw the leaves would no longer grow on the blasted trunk. When the rains descended in torrents, the ruins of the pagoda afforded her a shelter; and she sat listening to the rushing of the mighty waters, and the murmurs of the troubled deep, till her soul took its colour from the sombrous and magnificent imagery around her, and she believed herself precipitated to earth with the deluge—borne downward, like a leaf, by a cataract—engulphed in the depths of the ocean—rising again to light on the swell of the enormous billows, as if she were heaved on the back of a whale—deafened with the roar—giddy with the rush—till terror and delight embraced in that fearful exercise of imagination. So she lived like a flower

amid sun and storm, blooming in the light, and bending to the shower, and drawing the elements of her sweet and wild existence from both. And both seemed to mingle their influences kindly for her, as if she was a thing that nature loved, even in her angry mood, and gave a commission to the storm to nurture her, and to the deluge to spare the ark of her innocence, as it floated over the waters. This existence of felicity, half physical, half imaginative, but neither intellectual or impassioned, had continued till the seventeenth year of this beautiful and mild being, when a circumstance occurred that changed its hue for ever.

"On the evening of the day after the Indians had departed, Immalee, for that was the name her votarists had given her, was standing on the shore, when a being approached her unlike any she had ever beheld. The colour of his face and hands resembled her own more than those she was accustomed to see, but his garments, (which were

European), from their square uncouthness, their shapelessness, and their disfiguring projection about the hips, (it was the fashion of the year 1680), gave her a mixed sensation of ridicule, disgust, and wonder, which her beautiful features could express only by a smile—that smile, a *native of the face* from which not even surprise could banish it.

"The stranger approached, and the beautiful vision approached also, but not like an European female with low and graceful bendings, still less like an Indian girl with her low salams, but like a young fawn, all animation, timidity, confidence, and cowardice, expressed in almost a single action. She sprung from the sands—ran to her favourite tree;—returned again with her guard of peacocks, who expanded their superb trains with a kind of instinctive motion, as if they felt the danger that menaced their protectress, and, clapping her hands with exultation, seemed to invite them to share in the delight she felt in

gazing at the *new flower that had grown in the sand.*

"The stranger advanced, and, to Immalee's utter astonishment, addressed her in the language which she herself had retained some words of since her infancy, and had endeavoured in vain to make her peacocks, parrots, and loxias, answer her in corresponding sounds. But her language, from want of practice, had become so limited, that she was delighted to hear its most unmeaning sounds uttered by human lips; and when he said, according to the form of the times, "How do you, fair maid?" she answered, "God made me," from the words of the Christian Catechism that had been breathed into her infant lip. "God never made a fairer creature," replied the stranger, grasping her hand, and fixing on her eyes that still burn in the sockets of that arch-deceiver. "Oh yes!" answered Immalee, "he made many things more beautiful. The rose is redder than I am—the palm-tree is taller than I am—

and the wave is bluer than I am;—but they all change, and I never change. I have grown taller and stronger, though the rose fades every six moons; and the rock splits to let in the bats, when the earth shakes; and the waves fight in their anger till they turn grey, and far different from the beautiful colour they have when the moon comes dancing on them, and sending all the young, broken branches of her light to kiss my feet, as I stand on the soft sand. I have tried to gather them every night, but they all broke in my hand the moment I dipt it into water."—"And have you fared better with the stars?" said the stranger smiling.—"No," answered the innocent being, "the stars are the flowers of heaven, and the rays of the moon the boughs and branches; but though they are so bright, they only blossom in the night, —and I love better the flowers that I can gather, and twine in my hair. When I have been all night wooing a star, and it has listened and descended, springing

downwards like a peacock from its nest, it has hid itself often afterwards playfully amid the mangoes and tamarinds where it fell; and though I have searched for it till the moon looked wan and weary of lighting me, I never could find it. But where do you come from?—you are not scaly and voiceless like those who grow in the waters, and show their strange shapes as I sit on the shore at sun-set;—nor are you red and diminutive like those who come over the waters to me from other worlds, in houses that can live on the deep, and walk so swiftly, with their legs plunged in the water. Where do you come from? —you are not so bright as the stars that live in the blue sea above me, nor so deformed as those that toss in the darker sea at my feet. Where did you grow, and how came you here?—there is not a canoe on the sand; and though the shells bear the fish that live in them so lightly over the waters, they never would bear me. When I placed my foot on their scolloped

edge of crimson and purple, they sunk into the sand."—" Beautiful creature," said the stranger, " I come from a world where there are thousands like me."—" That is impossible," said Immalee, " for I live here alone, and other worlds must be like this."—" What I tell you is true, however," said the stranger. Immalee paused for a moment, as if making the first effort of reflection—an exertion painful enough to a being whose existence was composed of felicitous tacts and unreflecting instincts —and then exclaimed, " We both must have grown in the world of voices, for I know what you say better than the chirp of the loxia, or the cry of the peacock. That must be a delightful world where they all speak—what would I give that my roses grew in the world of answers !"

" At this moment the stranger made certain signals of hunger, which Immalee understood in a moment, and told him to follow her to where the tamarind and the fig were shedding their fruit—where the stream

was so clear, you could count the purple shells in its bed—and where she would scoop for him in the cocoa-shell the cool waters that flowed beneath the shade of the mango. As they went, she gave him all the information about herself that she could. She told him that she was the daughter of a palm-tree, under whose shade she had been first conscious of existence, but that her poor father had been long withered and dead—that she was very old, having seen many roses decay on their stalks; and though they were succeeded by others, she did not love them so well as the first, which were a great deal larger and brighter—that, in fact, every thing had grown smaller latterly, for she was now able to reach to the fruit which formerly she was compelled to wait for till it dropt on the ground;—but that the water was grown taller, for once she was forced to drink it on her hands and knees, and now she could scoop it in a cocoa-shell. Finally, she added, she was much older

than the moon, for she had seen it waste away till it was dimmer than the light of a fire-fly; and the moon that was lighting them now would decline too, and its successor be so small, that she would never again give it the name she had given to the first—Sun of the Night. "But," said her companion, "how are you able to speak a language you never learned from your loxias and peacocks?"—"I will tell you," said Immalee, with an air of solemnity, which her beauty and innocence made at once ludicrous and imposing, and in which she betrayed a slight tendency to that wish to mystify that distinguishes her delightful sex,—"there came a spirit to me from the world of voices, and it whispered to me sounds that I never have forgotten, long, long before I was born."—"Really?" said the stranger. "Oh yes!—long before I could gather a fig, or gather the water in my hand, and that must be before I was born. When I *was* born, I was not so high as the rose-bud, at which

I tried to catch, now I am as near the moon as the palm-tree—sometimes I catch her beams sooner than he does, therefore I must be very old, and very high." At these words, the stranger, with an expression indescribable, leaned against a tree. He viewed that lovely and helpless being, while he refused the fruits and water she offered him, with a look, that, for the first time, intimated compassion. The stranger feeling did not dwell long in a mansion it was unused to. The expression was soon exchanged for that half-ironical, half-diabolical glance Immalee could not understand. "And you live here alone," he said, "and you have lived in this beautiful place without a companion?"—"Oh no!" said Immalee, "I have a companion more beautiful than all the flowers in the isle. There is not a rose-leaf that drops in the river so bright as its cheek. My friend lives under the water, but its colours are so bright. It kisses me too, but its lips are very cold; and when I kiss it, it

seems to dance, and its beauty is all broken into a thousand faces, that come smiling at me like little stars. But, though my friend has a thousand faces, and I have but one, still there is one thing that troubles me. There is but one stream where it meets me, and that is where are no shadows from the trees—and I never can catch it but when the sun is bright. Then when I catch it in the stream, I kiss it on my knees; but my friend has grown so tall, that sometimes I wish it were smaller. Its lips spread so much wider, that I give it a thousand kisses for one that I get." "Is your friend male or female," said the stranger.—"What is that?" answered Immalee.—"I mean, of what sex is your friend?"

But to this question he could obtain no satisfactory answer; and it was not till his return the next day, when he revisited the isle, that he discovered Immalee's friend was what he suspected. He found this innocent and lovely being bending over a

stream that reflected her image, and wooing it with a thousand wild and graceful attitudes of joyful fondness. The stranger gazed at her for some time, and thoughts it would be difficult for man to penetrate into, threw their varying expression over his features for a moment. It was the first of his intended victims he had ever beheld with compunction. The joy, too, with which Immalee received him, almost brought back human feelings to a heart that had long renounced them; and, for a moment, he experienced a sensation like that of his master when he visited paradise,—pity for the flowers he resolved to wither for ever. He looked at her as she fluttered round him with outspread arms and dancing eyes; and sighed, while she welcomed him in tones of such wild sweetness, as suited a being who had hitherto conversed with nothing but the melody of birds and the murmur of waters. With all her ignorance, however, she could not help testifying her amazement at his ar-

riving at the isle without any visible means of conveyance. He evaded answering her on this point, but said, " Immalee, I come from a world wholly unlike that you inhabit, amid inanimate flowers, and unthinking birds. I come from a world where all, as I do, think and speak." Immalee was speechless with wonder and delight for some time; at length she exclaimed, " Oh, how they must love each other! even I love my poor birds and flowers, and the trees that shade, and the waters that sing to me!" The stranger smiled. " In all that world, perhaps there is not another being beautiful and innocent as you. It is a world of suffering, guilt, and care." It was with much difficulty she was made to comprehend the meaning of these words, but when she did, she exclaimed, " Oh, that I could live in that world, for I would make every one happy!"—" But you could not, Immalee," said the stranger; " this world is of such extent that it would take your whole life

to traverse it, and, during your progress, you never could be conversant with more than a small number of sufferers at a time, and the evils they undergo are in many instances such as you or no human power could relieve." At these words, Immalee burst into an agony of tears. "Weak, but lovely being," said the stranger, "could your tears heal the corrosions of disease?—cool the burning throb of a cancered heart?—wash the pale slime from the clinging lips of famine?—or, more than all, quench the fire of forbidden passion?" Immalee paused aghast at this enumeration, and could only faulter out, that wherever she went, she would bring her flowers and sunshine among the healthy, and they should all sit under the shade of her own tamarind. That for disease and death, she had long been accustomed to see flowers wither and die their beautiful death of nature. "And perhaps," she added, after a reflective pause, "as I have often known them to retain their delicious odour even after they were

faded, perhaps *what thinks* may live too after the form has faded, and that is a thought of joy." Of passion, she said she knew nothing, and could propose no remedy for an evil she was unconscious of. She had seen flowers fade with the season, but could not imagine why the flower should destroy itself. "But did you never trace a worm in the flower?" said the stranger, with the sophistry of corruption. "Yes," answered Immalee, "but the worm was not the native of the flower; its own leaves never could have hurt it." This led to a discussion, which Immalee's impregnable innocence, though combined with ardent curiosity and quick apprehension, rendered perfectly harmless to her. Her playful and desultory answers,—her restless eccentricity of imagination,—her keen and piercing, though ill-poised intellectual weapons,—and, above all, her instinctive and unfailing *tact* in matters of right and wrong, formed altogether an array that discomfited and baffled

the tempter more than if he had been compelled to encounter half the *wranglers* of the European academies of that day. In the logic of the schools he was well-versed, but in this logic of the heart and of nature, he was "ignorance itself." It is said, that the "awless lion" crouches before "a maid in the pride of her purity." The tempter was departing gloomily, when he saw tears start from the bright eyes of Immalee, and caught a wild and dark omen from her innocent grief. "And you weep, Immalee?" "Yes," said the beautiful being, "I always weep when I see the sun set in clouds; and will you, the sun of my heart, set in darkness too? and will you not rise again? will you not?" and, with the graceful confidence of pure innocence, she pressed her red delicious lip to his hand as she spoke. "Will you not? I shall never love my roses and peacocks if you do not return, for they cannot speak to me as you do, nor can I give them one thought, but you can give me many. Oh, I would like to

have many thoughts about *the world that suffers*, from which you came; and I believe you came from it, for, till I saw you, I never felt a pain that was not pleasure; but now, it is all pain when I think you will not return."—" I will return," said the stranger, " beautiful Immalee, and will shew you, at my return, a glimpse of that world from which I come, and in which you will soon be an inmate."—" But shall I see you there," said Immalee, " otherwise how shall I *talk thoughts?* "—" Oh yes,—oh certainly."—" But why do you repeat the same words twice; *your once* would have been enough."—" Well then, yes."—" Then take this rose from me, and let us inhale its odour together, as I say to my friend in the fountain, when I bend to kiss *it;* but my friend withdraws *its* rose before I have tasted it, and I leave mine on the water. Will you not take my rose," said the beautiful suppliant, bending towards him. " I will," said the stranger; and he took a flower from the cluster Im-

malee held out to him. It was a withered one. He snatched it, and hid it in his breast. "And will you go without a canoe across that dark sea?" said Immalee. —"We shall meet again, and meet in the *world of suffering*," said the stranger.—"Thank you,—oh, thank you," repeated Immalee, as she saw him plunge fearless amid the surf. The stranger answered only, "We shall meet again." Twice, as he parted, he threw a glance at the beautiful and isolated being; a lingering of humanity trembled round his heart,—but he tore the withered rose from his bosom, and to the waved arm and angel-smile of Immalee, he answered, "We shall meet again."

CHAPTER XVI.

Più non ho la dolce speranza.

DIDONE.

" SEVEN mornings and evenings Immalee paced the sands of her lonely isle, without seeing the stranger. She had still his promise to console her, that they should meet in the world of suffering; and this she repeated to herself as if it was full of hope and consolation. In this interval she tried to educate herself for her introduction into this world, and it was beautiful to see her

attempting, from vegetable and animal analogies, to form some image of the incomprehensible destiny of man. In the shade she watched the withering flower.—"The blood that ran red through its veins yesterday is purple to-day, and will be black and dry to-morrow," she said; "but it feels no pain—it dies patiently,—and the ranunculus and tulip near it are untouched by grief for their companion, or their colours would not be so resplendent. But can it be thus in the world that thinks? Could I see *him* wither and die, without withering and dying along with him. Oh no! when that flower fades, I will be the dew that falls over him!"

"She attempted to enlarge her comprehension, by observing the animal world. A young loxia had fallen dead from its pendent nest; and Immalee, looking into the aperture which that intelligent bird forms at the lower extremity of the nest to secure it from birds of prey, perceived the old ones with fire-flies in their small

beaks, their young one lying dead before them. At this sight Immalee burst into tears.—"Ah! you cannot weep," she said, "what an advantage I have over you! You eat, though your young one, your own one, is dead; but could I ever drink of the milk of the cocoa, if *he* could no longer taste it? I begin to comprehend what he said—to think, then, is to suffer—and a world of thought must be a world of pain! But how delicious are these tears! Formerly I wept for pleasure—but there is a pain sweeter than pleasure, that I never felt till I beheld *him.* Oh! who would not think, to have the joy of tears?"

"But Immalee did not occupy this interval solely in reflection; a new anxiety began to agitate her; and in the intervals of her meditation and her tears, she searched with avidity for the most glowing and fantastically wreathed shells to deck her arms and hair with. She changed her drapery of flowers every day, and never thought them fresh after the first hour; then she filled her

largest shells with the most limpid water, and her hollow cocoa nuts with the most delicious figs, interspersed with roses, and arranged them picturesquely on the stone bench of the ruined pagoda. The time, however, passed over without the arrival of the stranger, and Immalee, on visiting her fairy banquet the next day, wept over the withered fruit, but dried her eyes, and hastened to replace them.

" She was thus employed on the eighth morning, when she saw the stranger approach; and the wild and innocent delight with which she bounded towards him, excited in him for a moment a feeling of gloomy and reluctant compunction, which Immalee's quick susceptibility traced in his pausing step and averted eye. She stood trembling in lovely and pleading diffidence, as if intreating pardon for an unconscious offence, and asking permission to approach by the very attitude in which she forbore it, while tears stood in her eyes ready to fall at another repelling

motion. This sight "whetted his almost blunted purpose." She must learn to suffer, to qualify her to become my pupil, he thought. "Immalee, you weep," he added, approaching her. "Oh yes!" said Immalee, smiling like a spring morning through her tears; "you are to teach me to suffer, and I shall soon be very fit for your world—but I had rather weep for you, than smile on a thousand roses."—"Immalee," said the stranger, repelling the tenderness that melted him in spite of himself, "Immalee, I come to shew you something of the world of thought you are so anxious to inhabit, and of which you must soon become an inmate. Ascend this hill where the palm-trees are clustering, and you shall see a glimpse of part of it."—"But I would like to see the whole, and all at once!" said Immalee, with the natural avidity of thirsty and unfed intellect, that believes it can swallow all things, and digest all things. "The whole, and all at once!" said her conductor, turning to

smile at her as she bounded after him, breathles and glowing with newly excited feeling. " I doubt the part you will see to-night will be more than enough to satiate even your curiosity." As he spoke he drew a tube from his vest, and bid her apply it to her sight. The Indian obeyed him; but, after gazing a moment, uttered the emphatic exclamation, " I am there! —or are they here?" and sunk on the earth in a frenzy of delight. She rose again in a moment, and eagerly seizing the telescope, applied it in a wrong direction, which disclosed merely the sea to her view, and exclaimed sadly, " Gone!—gone!—all that beautiful world lived and died in a moment—all that I love die so —my dearest roses live not half so long as those I neglect—you were absent for seven moons since I first saw you, and the beautiful world lived only a moment."

" The stranger again directed the telescope towards the shore of India, from which they were not far distant, and Im-

malee again exclaimed in rapture, " Alive and more beautiful than ever !—all living, thinking things !—their *very walk thinks.* No mute fishes, and senseless trees, but wonderful rocks *, on which they look with pride, as if they were the works of their own hands. Beautiful rocks ! how I love the perfect straitness of your sides, and the crisped and flower-like knots of your decorated tops ! Oh that flowers grew, and birds fluttered round you, and then I would prefer you even to the rocks under which I watch the setting sun ! Oh what a world must that be where nothing is natural, and every thing beautiful !—thought must have done all that. But, how *little every thing is !*—thought should have made every thing larger—*thought should be a god.* But," she added with quick intelligence and self-accusing diffidence, " perhaps I am wrong. Sometimes

* Intellige " buildings."

I have thought I could lay my hand on the top of a palm-tree, but when, after a long, long time, I came close to it, I could not have reached its lowest leaf were I ten times higher than I am. Perhaps your beautiful world may grow higher as I approach it."—" Hold, Immalee," said the stranger, taking the telescope from her hands, " to enjoy this sight you should understand it."—" Oh yes!" said Immalee, with submissive anxiety, as the world of sense rapidly lost ground in her imagination against the new-found world of mind, —" yes—let me think."—" Immalee, have you any religion?" said the visitor, as an indescribable feeling of pain made his pale brow still paler. Immalee, quick in understanding and sympathising with physical feeling, darted away at these words, returned in a moment with a banyan leaf, with which she wiped the drops from his livid forehead; and then seating herself at his feet, in an attitude of profound but eager attention, repeated, " *Re-*

ligion! what is that? is it a new thought?" —" It is the consciousness of a Being superior to all worlds and their inhabitants, because he is the Maker of all, and will be their judge—of a Being whom we cannot see, but in whose power and presence we must believe, though invisible—of one who is every where unseen; always acting, though never in motion; hearing all things, but never heard." Immalee interrupted with an air of distraction—" Hold! too many thoughts will kill me—let me pause. I have seen the shower that came to refresh the rose-tree beat it to the earth." After an effort of solemn recollection, she added, " The voice of dreams told me something like that before I was born, but it is so long ago,—sometimes I have had thoughts within me like that voice. I have thought I loved the things around me too much, and that I should love things *beyond* me—flowers that could not fade, and a sun that never sets. I could have sprung, like a bird into the air, after such

a thought—but there was no one to shew me that path upward." And the young enthusiast lifted towards heaven eyes in which trembled the tears of ecstatic imaginings, and then turned their mute pleadings on the stranger.

"It is right," he continued, "not only to have thoughts of this Being, but to express them by some outward acts. The inhabitants of the world you are about to see, call this, *worship*,—and they have adopted (a Satanic smile curled his lip as he spoke) very different modes; so different, that, in fact, there is but one point in which they all agree—that of making their religion a torment;—the religion of some prompting them to torture themselves, and the religion of some prompting them to torture others. Though, as I observed, they all agree in this important point, yet unhappily they differ so much about the mode, that there has been much disturbance about it in the world that thinks."—"In the world that *thinks!*" repeated Im-

malee, "Impossible! Surely they must know that a difference cannot be acceptable to Him who is One."—"And have you then adopted no mode of expressing your thoughts of this Being, that is, of worshipping him?" said the stranger.—"I smile when the sun rises in its beauty, and I weep when I see the evening star rise," said Immalee.—"And do you recoil at the inconsistencies of varied modes of worship, and yet you yourself employ smiles and tears in your address to the Deity?"—"I do,—for they are both the expressions of joy with me," said the poor Indian; "the sun is as happy when he smiles through the rain-clouds, as when he burns in the mid-height of heaven, in the fierceness of his beauty; and I am happy whether I smile or I weep."—"Those whom you are about to see," said the stranger, offering her the telescope, "are as remote in their forms of worship as smiles from tears; but they are not, like you, equally happy in both."

Immalee applied her eye to the telescope, and exclaimed in rapture at what she saw. "What do you see?" said the stranger. Immalee described what she saw with many imperfect expressions, which, perhaps, may be rendered more intelligible by the explanatory words of the stranger.

"You see," said he, "the coast of India, the shores of the world near you.—There is the black pagoda of Juggernaut, that enormous building on which your eye is first fixed. Beside it stands a Turkish mosque—you may distinguish it by a figure like that of the half-moon. It is the will of him who rules that world, that its inhabitants should worship him by that sign *. At a small distance you may see a low building with a trident on its summit—that is the temple of Maha-deva, one

* Tippoo Saib wished to substitute the Mohamedan for the Indian mythology throughout his dominions. This circumstance, though long antedated, is therefore imaginable.

of the ancient goddesses of the country."—"But the houses are nothing to me," said Immalee, "shew me the living things that go there. The houses are not half so beautiful as the rocks on the shore, draperied all over with sea-weeds and mosses, and shaded by the distant palm-tree and cocoa."—"But those buildings," said the tempter, "are indicative of the various modes of thinking of those who frequent them. If it is into their thoughts you wish to look, you must see them expressed by their actions. In their dealings with each other, men are generally deceitful, but in their dealings with their gods, they are tolerably sincere in the expression of the character they assign them in their imaginations. If that character be formidable, they express fear; if it be one of cruelty, they indicate it by the sufferings they inflict on themselves; if it be gloomy, the image of the god is faithfully reflected in the visage of the worshipper. Look and judge."

" Immalee looked and saw a vast sandy plain, with the dark pagoda of Juggernaut in the perspective. On this plain lay the bones of a thousand skeletons, bleaching in the burning and unmoistened air. A thousand human bodies, hardly more alive, and scarce less emaciated, were trailing their charred and blackened bodies over the sands, to perish under the shadow of the temple, hopeless of ever reaching that of its walls.

" Multitudes of them dropt dead as they crawled. Multitudes still living, faintly waved their hands, to scare the vultures that hovered nearer and nearer at every swoop, and scooped the poor remnants of flesh from the living bones of the screaming victim, and retreated, with an answering scream of disappointment at the scanty and tasteless morsel they had torn away."

" Many tried, in their false and fanatic zeal, to double their torments, by crawling through the sands on their hands and

knees; but hands through the backs of which the nails had grown, and knees worn literally to the bone, struggled but feebly amid the sands and the skeletons, and the bodies that were soon to be skeletons, and the vultures that were to make them so.

"Immalee withheld her breath, as if she inhaled the abominable effluvia of this mass of putrefaction, which is said to desolate the shores near the temple of Juggernaut, like a pestilence.

"Close to this fearful scene, came on a pageant, whose splendour made a brilliant and terrible contrast to the loathsome and withering desolation of animal and intellectual life, amid which its pomp came towering, and sparkling, and trembling on. An enormous fabric, more resembling a moving palace than a triumphal car, supported the inshrined image of Juggernaut, and was dragged forward by the united strength of a thousand human bodies, priests, victims, brahmins, faqueers and all.

In spite of this huge force, the impulse was so unequal, that the whole edifice rocked and tottered from time to time, and this singular union of instability and splendour, of trembling decadence and terrific glory, gave a faithful image of the meretricious exterior, and internal hollowness, of idolatrous religion. As the procession moved on, sparkling amid desolation, and triumphant amid death, multitudes rushed forward from time to time, to prostrate themselves under the wheels of the enormous machine, which crushed them to atoms in a moment, and passed on;—others "cut themselves with knives and lancets after their manner," and not believing themselves worthy to perish beneath the wheels of the idol's chariot, sought to propitiate him by dying the tracks of those wheels with their blood;—their relatives and friends shouted with delight as they saw the streams of blood dye the car and its line of progress, and hoped for an interest in these voluntary sacrifices, with as much e-

nergy, and perhaps as much reason, as the Catholic votarist does in the penance of St Bruno, or the ex-oculation of St Lucia, or the martyrdom of St Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins, which, being interpreted, means the martyrdom of a single female named *Undecimilla,* which the Catholic legends read *Undecim Mille.*

" The procession went on, amid that mixture of rites that characterizes idolatry in all countries,—half resplendent, half horrible—appealing to nature while they rebel against her—mingling flowers with blood, and casting alternately a screaming infant, or a garland of roses, beneath the car of the idol.

" Such was the picture that presented to the strained, incredulous eyes of Immalee, those mingled features of magnificence and horror,—of joy and suffering,—of crushed flowers and mangled bodies,—of magnificence calling on torture for its triumph,—and the steam of blood and the incense of the rose, inhaled at once by the

triumphant nostrils of an incarnate demon, who rode amid the wrecks of nature and the spoils of the heart! Immalee gazed on in horrid curiosity. She saw, by the aid of the telescope, a boy seated on the front of the moving temple, who "perfected the praise" of the loathsome idol, with all the outrageous lubricities of the Phallic worship. From the slightest consciousness of the meaning of this phenomenon, her unimaginable purity protected her as with a shield. It was in vain that the tempter plied her with questions, and hints of explanation, and offers of illustration. He found her chill, indifferent, and even incurious. He gnashed his teeth and gnawed his lip *en parenthese.* But when she saw mothers cast their infants under the wheels of the car, and then turn to watch the wild and wanton dance of the Almahs, and appear, by their open lips and clapped hands, to keep time to the sound of the silver bells that tinkled round their slight ankles, while their infants were writhing

in their dying agony,—she dropt the telescope in horror, and exclaimed, "The world that thinks does not feel. I never saw the rose kill the bud!"

"But look again," said the tempter, "to that square building of stone, round which a few stragglers are collected, and whose summit is surmounted by a trident. —that is the temple of Maha-deva, a goddess who possesses neither the power or the popularity of the great idol Juggernaut. Mark how her worshippers approach her." Immalee looked, and saw women offering flowers, fruits, and perfumes; and some young girls brought birds in cages, whom they set free; others, after making vows for the safety of some absent, sent a small and gaudy boat of paper, illuminated with wax, down the stream of an adjacent river, with injunctions never to sink till it reached him.

"Immalee smiled with pleasure at the rites of this harmless and elegant superstition. "This is not the religion of tor-

ment," said she.—" Look again," said the stranger. She did, and beheld those very women whose hands had been employed in liberating birds from their cages, suspending, on the branches of the trees which shadowed the temple of Maha-deva, baskets containing their new-born infants, who were left there to perish with hunger, or be devoured by the birds, while their mothers danced and sung in honour of the goddess.

" Others were occupied in conveying, apparently with the most zealous and tender watchfulness, their aged parents to the banks of the river, where, after assisting them to perform their ablations, with all the intensity of filial and divine piety, they left them half immersed in the water, to be devoured by alligators, who did not suffer their wretched prey to linger in long expectation of their horrible death; while others were deposited in the jungles near the banks of the river, where they met with a fate as certain and as horrible, from

the tigers who infested it, and whose yell soon hushed the feeble wail of their unresisting victims.

"Immalee sunk on the earth at this spectacle, and clasping both hands over her eyes, remained speechless with grief and horror.

"Look yet again," said the stranger, "the rites of all religions are not so bloody." Once more she looked, and saw a Turkish mosque, towering in all the splendour that accompanied the first introduction of the religion of Mahomet among the Hindoos. It reared its gilded domes, and carved minarets, and crescented pinnacles, rich with all the profusion which the decorative imagination of Oriental architecture, at once light and luxuriant, gorgeous and aerial, delights to lavish on its favourite works.

"A group of stately Turks were approaching the mosque, at the call of the muezzin. Around the building arose neither tree nor shrub; it borrowed neither shade nor ornament from nature; it had

none of those soft and graduating shades and hues, which seem to unite the works of God and the creature for the glory of the former, and calls on the inventive magnificence of art, and the spontaneous loveliness of nature, to magnify the Author of both; it stood the independent work and emblem of vigorous hands and proud minds, such as appeared to belong to those who now approached it as worshippers. Their finely featured and thoughtful countenances, their majestic habits, and lofty figures, formed an imposing contrast to the unintellectual expression, the crouching posture, and the half naked squalidness of some poor Hindoos, who, seated on their hams, were eating their mess of rice, as the stately Turks passed on to their devotions. Immalee viewed them with a feeling of awe and pleasure, and began to think there might be some good in the religion professed by these noble-looking beings. But, before they entered the mosque, they spurned and spit at the un-

offending and terrified Hindoos; they struck them with the flats of their sabres, and, terming them dogs of idolaters, they cursed them in the name of God and the prophet. Immalee, revolted and indignant at the sight, though she could not hear the words that accompanied it, demanded the reason of it. "Their religion," said the stranger, "binds them to hate all who do not worship as they do."—"Alas!" said Immalee, weeping, "is not that hatred which their religion teaches, a proof that theirs is the worst? But why," she added, her features illuminated with all the wild and sparkling intelligence of wonder, while flushed with recent fears, "why do I not see among them some of those lovelier beings, whose habits differ from theirs, and whom you call women? Why do they not worship also; or have they a milder religion of their own?"—"*That* religion," replied the stranger, "is not very favourable to those beings, of whom you are the loveliest; it teaches that men shall have different com-

panions in the world of souls; nor does it clearly intimate that women shall ever arrive there. Hence you may see some of these excluded beings wandering amid those stones that designate the place of their dead, repeating prayers for the dead whom they dare not hope to join; and others, who are old and indigent, seated at the doors of the mosque, reading aloud passages from a book lying on their knees, (which they call the Koran), with the hope of soliciting alms, not of exciting devotion." At these desolating words, Immalee, who had in vain looked to any of these systems for that hope or solace which her pure spirit and vivid imagination alike thirsted for, felt a recoiling of the soul unutterable at religion thus painted to her, and exhibiting only a frightful picture of blood and cruelty, of the inversion of every principle of nature, and the disruption of every tie of the heart.

" She flung herself on the ground, and exclaiming, " There is no God, if there be

none but theirs!" then, starting up as if to take a last view, in the desperate hope that all was an illusion, she discovered a small obscure building overshaded by palm-trees, and surmounted by a cross; and struck by the unobtrusive simplicity of its appearance, and the scanty number and peaceable demeanour of the few who were approaching it, she exclaimed, that this must be a new religion, and eagerly demanded its name and rites. The stranger evinced some uneasiness at the discovery she had made, and testified still more reluctance to answer the questions which it suggested; but they were pressed with such restless and coaxing importunity, and the beautiful being who urged them made such an an artless transition from profound and meditative grief to childish, yet intelligent curiosity, that it was not in man, or more or less than man, to resist her.

Her glowing features, as she turned them toward him, with an expression half impatient, half pleading, were indeed those

" * of a stilled infant smiling through its tears." Perhaps, too, another cause might have operated on this prophet of curses, and made him utter a blessing where he meant malediction; but into this we dare not inquire, nor will it ever be fully known till the day when all secrets must be disclosed. However it was, he felt himself compelled to tell her it was a new religion, the religion of Christ, whose rites and worshippers she beheld. " But what are the rites?" asked Immalee. " Do they murder their children, or their parents, to prove their love to God? Do they hang them on baskets to perish, or leave them on the banks of rivers to be devoured by fierce and hideous animals?"—" The religion they profess forbids that," said the stranger, with reluctant truth; " it requires them to honour their parents, and to cherish their

* I trust the absurdity of this quotation here will be forgiven for its beauty. It is borrowed from Miss Baillie, the first dramatic poet of the age.

children."—"But why do they not spurn from the entrance to their church those who do not think as they do?"—"Because their religion enjoins them to be mild, benevolent, and tolerant; and neither to reject or disdain those who have not attained its purer light."—"But why is there no splendour or magnificence in their worship; nothing grand or attractive?"—"Because they know that God cannot be acceptably worshipped but by pure hearts and crimeless hands; and though their religion gives every hope to the penitent guilty, it flatters none with false promises of external devotion supplying the homage of the heart; or artificial and picturesque religion standing in the place of that single devotion to God, before whose throne, though the proudest temples erected to his honour crumble into dust, the heart burns on the altar still, an inextinguishable and acceptable victim."

"As he spoke, (perhaps constrained by a higher power), Immalee bowed her glow-

ing face to the earth, and then raising it with the look of a new-born angel, exclaimed, "Christ shall be my God, and I will be a Christian!" Again she bowed in the deep prostration which indicates the united submission of soul and body, and remained in this attitude of absorption so long, that, when she rose, she did not perceive the absence of her companion.—"He fled murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night."

CHAPTER XIV.

"Why, I did say something about getting a licence from the Cadi."

BLUE BEARD.

"THE visits of the stranger were interrupted for some time, and when he returned, it seemed as if their purpose was no longer the same. He no longer attempted to corrupt her principles, or sophisticate her understanding, or mystify her views of religion. On the latter subject he was quite silent, seemed to regret he had ever touched on it, and not

all her restless avidity of knowledge, or caressing importunity of manner, could extract from him another syllable on the subject. He repayed her amply, however, by the rich, varied, and copious stores of a mind, furnished with matter apparently beyond the power of human experience to have collected, confined, as it is, within the limits of threescore years and ten. But this never struck Immalee; she took " no note of time;" and the tale of yesterday, or the record of past centuries, were synchronized in a mind to which facts and dates were alike unknown; and which was alike unacquainted with the graduating shades of manner, and the linked progress of events.

" They often sat on the shore of the isle in the evening, where Immalee always prepared a seat of moss for her visitor, and gazed together on the blue deep in silence; for Immalee's newly-awaked intellect and heart felt that bankruptcy of language, which profound feeling will impress on the

most cultivated intellect, and which, in her case, was increased alike by her innocence and her ignorance; and her visitor had perhaps reasons still stronger for his silence. This silence, however, was often broken. There was not a vessel that sailed in the distance which did not suggest an eager question from Immalee, and did not draw a slow and extorted reply from the stranger. His knowledge was immense, various, and profound, (but this was rather a subject of delight than of curiosity to his beautiful pupil); and from the Indian canoe, rowed by naked natives, to the splendid, and clumsy, and ill-managed vessels of the Rajahs, that floated like huge and gilded fish tumbling in uncouth and shapeless mirth on the wave, to the gallant and well-manned vessels of Europe, that came on like the gods of ocean bringing fertility and knowledge, the discoveries of art, and the blessings of civilization, wherever their sails were unfurled and their anchors dropt,—he could tell her all,—describe the destination of

every vessel,—the feelings, characters, and national habits of the many-minded inmates,—and enlarge her knowledge to a degree which books never could have done; for colloquial communication is always the most vivid and impressive medium, and lips have a prescriptive right to be the first intelligencers in instruction and in love.

"Perhaps this extraordinary being, with regard to whom the laws of mortality and the feelings of nature seemed to be alike suspended, felt a kind of sad and wild repose from the destiny that immitigably pursued him, in the society of Immalee. We know not, and can never tell, what sensations her innocent and helpless beauty inspired him with, but the result was, that he ceased to regard her as his victim; and, when seated beside her listening to her questions, or answering them, seemed to enjoy the few lucid intervals of his insane and morbid existence. Absent from her, he returned to the world to torture and

to tempt in the mad-house where the Englishman Stanton was tossing on his straw——"

"Hold!" said Melmoth; "what name have you mentioned?"—"Have patience with me, Senhor," said Monçada, who did not like interruption; "have patience, and you will find we are all beads strung on the same string. Why should we jar against each other? our union is indissoluble." He proceeded with the story of the unhappy Indian, as recorded in the parchments of Adonijah, which he had been compelled to copy, and of which he was anxious to impress every line and letter on his listener, to substantiate his own extraordinary story.

"When absent from her, his purpose was what I have described; but while present, that purpose seemed suspended; he gazed often on her with eyes whose wild and fierce lustre was quenched in a dew that he hastily wiped away, and gazed on her again. While he sat near her on the

flowers she had collected for him,—while he looked on those timid and rosy lips that waited his signal to speak, like buds that did not dare to blow till the sun shone on them,—while he heard accents issue from those lips which he felt it would be as impossible to pervert as it would be to teach the nightingale blasphemy,--he sunk down beside her, passed his hand over his livid brow, and, wiping off some cold drops, thought for a moment he was not the Cain of the moral world, and that the brand was effaced,—at least for a moment. The habitual and impervious gloom of his soul soon returned. He felt again the gnawings of the worm that never dies, and the scorchings of the fire that is never to be quenched. He turned the fatal light of his dark eyes on the only being who never shrunk from their expression, for her innocence made her fearless. He looked intensely at her, while rage, despair, and pity, convulsed his heart; and as he beheld the confiding and conciliating smile with which this gentle

being met a look that might have withered the heart of the boldest within him,—a Semele gazing in supplicating love on the lightnings that were to blast her,—one human drop dimmed their portentous lustre, as its softened rays fell on her. Turning fiercely away, he flung his view on the ocean, as if to find, in the sight of human life, some fuel for the fire that was consuming his vitals. The ocean, that lay calm and bright before them as a sea of jasper, never reflected two more different countenances, or sent more opposite feelings to two hearts. Over Immalee's, it breathed that deep and delicious reverie, which those forms of nature that unite tranquillity and profundity diffuse over souls whose innocence gives them a right to an unmingled and exclusive enjoyment of nature. None but crimeless and unimpassioned minds ever truly enjoyed earth, ocean, and heaven. At our first transgression, nature expels us, as it did our first parents, from her paradise for ever.

"To the stranger the view was fraught

with far different visions. He viewed it as a tiger views a forest abounding with prey; there might be the storm and the wreck; or, if the elements were obstinately calm, there might be the gaudy and gilded pleasure barge, in which a Rajah and the beautiful women of his haram were inhaling the sea breeze under canopies of silk and gold, overturned by the unskilfulness of their rowers, and their plunge, and struggle, and dying agony, amid the smile and beauty of the calm ocean, produce one of those contrasts in which his fierce spirit delighted. Or, were even this denied, he could watch the vessels as they floated by, and, from the skiff to the huge trader, be sure that every one bore its freight of woe and crime. There came on the European vessels full of the passions and crimes of another world,—of its sateless cupidity, remorseless cruelty, its intelligence, all awake and ministrant in the cause of its evil passions, and its very refinement operating as a stimulant to more inventive

indulgence, and more systematized vice. He saw them approach to traffic for "gold, and silver, and the souls of men;"—to grasp, with breathless rapacity, the gems and precious produce of those luxuriant climates, and deny the inhabitants the rice that supported their inoffensive existence; —to discharge the load of their crimes, their lust and their avarice, and after ravaging the land, and plundering the natives, depart, leaving behind them famine, despair, and execration; and bearing with them back to Europe, blasted constitutions, inflamed passions, ulcerated hearts, and consciences that could not endure the extinction of a light in their sleeping apartment.

"Such were the objects for which he watched; and one evening, when solicited by Immalee's incessant questions about the worlds to which the vessels were hastening, or to which they were returning, he gave her a description of the world, after his manner, in a spirit of mingled

derision, malignity, and impatient bitterness at the innocence of her curiosity. There was a mixture of fiendish acrimony, biting irony, and fearful truth, in his wild sketch, which was often interrupted by the cries of astonishment, grief, and terror, from his hearer. "They come," said he, pointing to the European vessels, "from a world where the only study of the inhabitants is how to increase their own sufferings, and those of others, to the utmost possible degree; and, considering they have only had 4000 years practice at the task, it must be allowed they are tolerable proficients."—"But is it possible?"—"You shall judge. In aid, doubtless, of this desirable object, they have been all originally gifted with imperfect constitutions and evil passions; and, not to be ungrateful, they pass their lives in contriving how to augment the infirmities of the one, and aggravate the acerbities of the other. They are not like you, Immalee, a being who breathes amid roses, and subsists only

on the juices of fruits, and the lymph of the pure element. In order to render their thinking powers more gross, and their spirits more fiery, they devour animals, and torture from abused vegetables a drink, that, without quenching thirst, has the power of extinguishing reason, inflaming passion, and shortening life—the best result of all—for life under such circumstances owes its only felicity to the shortness of its duration."

"Immalee shuddered at the mention of animal food, as the most delicate European would at the mention of a cannibal feast; and while tears trembled in her beautiful eyes, she turned them wistfully on her peacocks with an expression that made the stranger smile. "Some," said he, by way of consolation, "have a taste by no means so sophisticated,—they content themselves at their need with the flesh of their fellow-creatures; and as human life is always miserable, and animal life never so, (except from elementary causes),

one would imagine this the most humane and salutary way of at once gratifying the appetite, and diminishing the mass of human suffering. But as these people pique themselves on their ingenuity in aggravating the sufferings of their situation, they leave thousands of human beings yearly to perish by hunger and grief, and amuse themselves in feeding on animals, whom, by depriving of existence, they deprive of the only pleasure their condition has allotted them. When they have thus, by unnatural diet and outrageous stimulation, happily succeeded in corrupting infirmity into disease, and exasperating passion into madness, they proceed to exhibit the proofs of their success, with an expertness and consistency truly admirable. They do not, like you, Immalee, live in the lovely independence of nature—lying on the earth, and sleeping with all the eyes of heaven unveiled to watch you—treading the same grass till your light step feels a friend in every blade it presses—and conversing

with flowers, till you feel yourself and them children of the united family of nature, whose mutual language of love you have almost learned to speak to each other —no, to effect their purpose, their food, which is of itself poison, must be rendered more fatal by the air they inhale; and therefore the more civilized crowd all together into a space which their own respiration, and the exhalation of their bodies, renders pestilential, and which gives a celerity inconceivable to the circulation of disease and mortality. Four thousand of them will live together in a space smaller than the last and lightest colonnade of your young banyan-tree, in order, doubtless, to increase the effects of fœtid air, artificial heat, unnatural habits, and impracticable exercise. The result of these judicious precautions is just what may be guessed. The most trifling complaint becomes immediately infectious, and, during the ravages of the pestilence, which this habit generates, ten thousand lives a-day

are the customary sacrifice to the habit of living in cities."—"But they die in the arms of those they love," said Immalee, whose tears flowed fast at this recital; "and is not that better than even *life* in solitude,—as mine was before I beheld you?"

"The stranger was too intent on his description to heed her. "To these cities they resort nominally for security and protection, but really for the sole purpose to which their existence is devoted,—that of aggravating its miseries by every ingenuity of refinement. For example, those who live in uncontrasted and untantalized misery, can hardly feel it—suffering becomes their habit, and they feel no more jealousy of their situation than the bat, who clings in blind and famishing stupefaction to the cleft of a rock, feels of the situation of the butterfly, who drinks of the dew, and bathes in the bloom of every flower. But the people of the *other worlds* have invented, by means of living in cities, a new

and singular mode of aggravating human wretchedness—that of contrasting it with the wild and wanton excess of superfluous and extravagant splendour."

"Here the stranger had incredible difficulty to make Immalee comprehend how there could be an unequal division of the means of existence; and when he had done his utmost to explain it to her, she continued to repeat, (her white finger on her scarlet lip, and her small foot beating the moss), in a kind of pouting inquietude, "Why should some have more than they can eat, and others nothing to eat?"—"This," continued the stranger, "is the most exquisite refinement on that art of torture which those beings are so expert in—to place misery by the side of opulence—to bid the wretch who dies for want feed on the sound of the splendid equipages which shake his hovel as they pass, but leave no relief behind—to bid the industrious, the ingenious, and the imaginative, starve, while bloated medio-

crity pants from excess—to bid the dying sufferer feel that life might be prolonged by one drop of that exciting liquor, which, wasted, produces only sickness or madness in those whose lives it undermines;—to do this is their principal object, and it is fully attained. The sufferer through whose rags the wind of winter blows, like arrows lodging in every pore—whose tears freeze before they fall—whose soul is as dreary as the night under whose cope his resting-place must be—whose glued and clammy lips are unable to receive the food which famine, lying like a burning coal at his vitals, craves—and who, amid the horrors of a houseless winter, might prefer its desolation to that of the den that abuses the name of home—without food—without light—where the howlings of the storm are answered by the fiercer cries of hunger—and he must stumble to his murky and strawless nook over the bodies of his children, who have sunk on the floor, not

for rest, but despair. Such a being, is he not sufficiently miserable?"

"Immalee's shudderings were her only answer, (though of many parts of his description she had a very imperfect idea). "No, he is not enough so yet," pursued the stranger, pressing the picture on her; "let his steps, that know not where they wander, conduct him to the gates of the affluent and the luxurious—let him feel that plenty and mirth are removed from him but by the interval of a wall, and yet more distant than if severed by worlds—let him feel that while *his* world is darkness and cold, the eyes of those within are aching with the blaze of light, and hands relaxed by artificial heat, are soliciting with fans the refreshment of a breeze—let him feel that every groan he utters is answered by a song or a laugh—and let him die on the steps of the mansion, while his last conscious pang is aggravated by the thought, that the price of the hundredth

part of the luxuries that lie untasted before heedless beauty and sated epicurism, would have protracted his existence, while it poisons theirs—let him *die of want on the threshold of a banquet-hall*, and then admire with me the ingenuity that displays itself in this new combination of misery. The inventive activity of the people of the world, in the multiplication of calamity, is inexhaustibly fertile in resources. Not satisfied with diseases and famine, with sterility of the earth, and tempests of the air, they must have laws and marriages, and kings and tax-gatherers, and wars and fetes, and every variety of artificial misery inconceivable to you."

"Immalee, overpowered by this torrent of words, to her unintelligible words, in vain asked a connected explanation of them. The demon of his superhuman misanthropy had now fully possessed him, and not even the tones of a voice as sweet as the strings of David's harp, had power to ex-

pel the evil one. So he went on flinging about his fire-brands and arrows, and then saying, "Am I not in sport? These people*," said he, "have made unto themselves kings, that is, beings whom they voluntarily invest with the privilege of draining, by taxation, whatever wealth their vices have left to the rich, and whatever means of subsistence their want has left to the poor, till their extortion is cursed from the castle to the cottage—and this to support a few pampered favourites, who are harnessed by silken reins to the car, which they drag

* As, by a mode of criticism equally false and unjust, the worst sentiments of my worst characters, (from the ravings of Bertram to the blasphemies of Cardonneau), have been represented as *my own*, I must here trespass so far on the patience of the reader as to assure him, that the sentiments ascribed to the stranger are diametrically opposite to mine, and that I have purposely put them into the mouth of an agent of the enemy of mankind.

over the prostrate bodies of the multitude. Sometimes exhausted by the monotony of perpetual fruition, which has no parallel even in the monotony of suffering, (for the latter has at least the excitement of hope, which is for ever denied to the former), they amuse themselves by making war, that is, collecting the greatest number of human beings that can be bribed to the task, to cut the throats of a less, equal, or greater number of beings, bribed in the same manner for the same purpose. These creatures have not the least cause of enmity to each other—they do not know, they never beheld each other. Perhaps they might, under other circumstances, wish each other well, as far as human malignity would suffer them; but from the moment they are hired for legalized massacre, hatred is their duty, and murder their delight. The man who would feel reluctance to destroy the reptile that crawls in his path, will equip him-

self with metals fabricated for the purpose of destruction, and smile to see it stained with the blood of a being, whose existence and happiness he would have sacrificed his own to promote, under other circumstances. So strong is this habit of aggravating misery under artificial circumstances, that it has been known, when in a sea-fight a vessel has blown up, (here a long explanation was owed to Immalee, which may be spared the reader), the people of that world have plunged into the water to save, at the risk of their own lives, the lives of those with whom they were grappling amid fire and blood a moment before, and whom, though they would sacrifice to their passions, their pride refused to sacrifice to the elements."—"Oh that is beautiful!—that is glorious!" said Immalee, clasping her white hands; "I could bear all you describe to see that sight!"

"Her smile of innocent delight, her spontaneous burst of high-toned feeling,

had the usual effect of adding a darker shade to the frown of the stranger, and a sterner curve to the repulsive contraction of his upper lip, which was never raised but to express hostility or contempt.

"But what do the kings do?" said Immalee, "while they are making men kill each other for nothing?"—"You are ignorant, Immalee," said the stranger, "very ignorant, or you would not have said it was for *nothing*. Some of them fight for ten inches of barren sand—some for the dominion of the salt wave—some for anything—and some for nothing—but all for pay and poverty, and occasional excitement, and the love of action, and the love of change, and the dread of home, and the consciousness of evil passions, and the hope of death, and the admiration of the showy dress in which they are to perish. The best of the jest is, they contrive not only to reconcile themselves to these cruel and wicked absurdities, but to dignify them with the most imposing names their

perverted language supplies—the names of fame, of glory, of recording memory, and admiring posterity.

"Thus a wretch whom want, idleness, or intemperance, drives to this reckless and heart-withering business,—who leaves his wife and children to the mercy of strangers, or to famish, (terms nearly synonimous), the moment he has assumed the blushing badge that privileges massacre, becomes, in the imagination of this intoxicated people, the defender of his country, entitled to her gratitude and to her praise. The idle stripling, who hates the cultivation of intellect, and despises the meanness of occupation, feels, perhaps, a taste for arraying his person in colours as gaudy as the parrot's or the peacock's; and this effeminate propensity is baptised by the prostituted name of the love of glory—and this complication of motives borrowed from vanity and from vice, from the fear of distress, the wantonness of idleness, and the appetite for mischief, finds one convenient

and sheltering appellation in the single sound—patriotism. And those beings who never knew one generous impulse, one independent feeling, ignorant of either the principles or the justice of the cause for which they contend, and wholly uninterested in the result, except so far as it involves the concerns of their own vanity, cupidity, and avarice, are, while living, hailed by the infatuated world as its benefactors, and when dead, canonized as its martyrs. He died in his country's cause, is the epitaph inscribed by the rash hand of indiscriminating eulogy on the grave of ten thousand, who had ten thousand different motives for their choice and their fate,—who might have lived to be their country's enemies if they had not *happened* to fall in her defence,—and whose love of their country, if fairly analysed, was, under its various forms of vanity, restlessness, the love of tumult, or the love of show—purely love of themselves. There let them rest—nothing but the wish to disabuse

their idolaters, who prompt the sacrifice, and then applaud the victim they have made, could have tempted me to dwell thus long on beings as mischievous in their lives, as they are insignificant in their death.

"Another amusement of these people, so ingenious in multiplying the sufferings of their destiny, is what they call law. They pretend to find in this a security for their persons and their properties—with how much justice, their own felicitous experience must inform them! Of the security it gives to the latter, judge, Immalee, when I tell you, that you might spend your life in their courts, without being able to prove that those roses you have gathered and twined in your hair were your own—that you might starve for this day's meal, while proving your right to a property which must incontestibly be yours, on the condition of your being able to fast on a few years, and survive to enjoy it—and that, finally, with the sen-

timents of all upright men, the opinions of the judges of the land, and the fullest conviction of your own conscience in your favour, you cannot obtain the possession of what you and all feel to be your own, while your antagonist can start an objection, purchase a fraud, or invent a lie. So pleadings go on, and years are wasted, and property consumed, and hearts broken,—and law triumphs. One of its most admirable triumphs is in that ingenuity by which it contrives to convert a difficulty into an impossibility, and punish a man for not doing what it has rendered impracticable for him to do.

" When he is unable to pay his debts, it deprives him of liberty and credit, to insure that inability still further; and while destitute alike of the means of subsistence, or the power of satisfying his creditors, he is enabled, by this righteous arrangement, to console himself, at least, with the reflection, that he can injure his creditor as much as he has suffered from him—that

certain loss is the reward of immitigable cruelty—and that, while he famishes in prison, the page in which his debt is recorded rots away faster than his body; and the angel of death, with one obliterating sweep of his wing, cancels misery and debt, and presents, grinning in horrid triumph, the release of debtor and debt, signed by a hand that makes the judges tremble on their seats."—"But they have religion," said the poor Indian, trembling at this horrible description; "they have that religion which you shewed me—its mild and peaceful spirit—its quietness and resignation—no blood—no cruelty."—"Yes, —true," said the stranger, with some reluctance, "they have religion; for in their zeal for suffering, they feel the torments of one world not enough, unless aggravated by the terrors of another. They have such a religion, but what use have they made of it? Intent on their settled purpose of discovering misery wherever it could be traced, and inventing it where it

could not, they have found, even in the pure pages of that book, which, they presume to say, contains their title to peace on earth, and happiness hereafter, a right to hate, plunder, and murder each other. Here they have been compelled to exercise an extraordinary share of perverted ingenuity. The book contains nothing but what is good, and evil must be the minds, and hard the labour of those evil minds, to extort a tinge from it to colour their pretensions withal. But mark, in pursuance of their great object, (the aggravation of general misery), mark how subtilly they have wrought. They call themselves by various names, to excite passions suitable to the names they bear. Thus some forbid the perusal of that book to their disciples, and others assert, that from the exclusive study of its pages alone, can the hope of salvation be learned or substantiated. It is singular, however, that with all their ingenuity, they have never been able to extract a subject of difference from the

essential contents of that book, to which they all appeal—so they proceed after their manner.

" They never dare to dispute that it contains irresistible injunctions,—that those who believe in it should live in habits of peace, benevolence, and harmony,—that they should love each other in prosperity, and assist each other in adversity. They dare not deny that the spirit that book inculcates and inspires, is a spirit whose fruits are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, mildness, and truth. On these points they never presumed to differ.—They are too plain to be denied, so they contrive to make matter of difference out of the various habits they wear; and they cut each other's throats for the love of God, on the important subject *, whether their jackets should be red or white—or whether

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* The Catholics and Protestants were thus distinguished in the wars of the League.

their priests should be arrayed in silk ribbons *, or white linen †, or black household garments ‡—or whether they should immerse their children in water, or sprinkle them with a few drops of it—or whether they should partake of the memorials of the death of him they all profess to love, standing or on their knees—or—— But I weary you with this display of human wickedness and absurdity. One point is plain, they all agree that the language of the book is, "Love one another," while they all translate that language, "Hate one another." But as they can find neither materials or excuse from that book, they search for them in their own minds,—and there they are never at a loss, for human minds are inexhaustible in malignity and hostility; and when they borrow the name of that book to sanction them, the deification of their passions becomes a duty, and their worst impulses are hallowed and

* Catholics. † Protestants. ‡ Dissenters.

practised as virtues."—"Are there no parents or children in these horrible worlds?" said Immalee, turning her tearful eyes on this traducer of humanity; "none that love each other as I loved the tree under which I was first conscious of existence, or the flowers that grew with me?"—"Parents?—children?" said the stranger; "Oh yes! There are fathers who instruct their sons——" And his voice was lost—he struggled to recover it.

"After a long pause, he said, "There are some kind parents among those sophisticated people."—"And who are they?" said Immalee, whose heart throbbed spontaneously at the mention of kindliness.—"Those," said the stranger, with a withering smile, "who murder their children at the hour of their birth, or, by medical art, dismiss them before they have seen the light; and, in so doing, they give the only credible evidence of parental affection."

"He ceased, and Immalee remained silent in melancholy meditation on what

she had heard. The acrid and searing irony of his language had made no impression on one with whom "speech was truth," and who could have no idea why a circuitous mode of conveying meaning could be adopted, when even a direct one was often attended with difficulty to herself. But she could understand, that he had spoken much of evil and of suffering, names unknown to her before she beheld him, and she turned on him a glance that seemed at once to thank and reproach him for her painful initiation into the mysteries of a new existence. She had, indeed, tasted of the tree of knowledge, and her eyes were opened, but its fruit was bitter to her taste, and her looks conveyed a kind of mild and melancholy gratitude, that would have wrung the heart for giving its first lesson of pain to the heart of a being so beautiful, so gentle, and so innocent. The stranger marked this blended expression, and exulted.

"He had distorted life thus to her ima-

gination, perhaps with the purpose of terrifying her from a nearer view of it; perhaps in the wild hope of keeping her for ever in this solitude, where he might sometimes see her, and catch, from the atmosphere of purity that surrounded her, the only breeze that floated over the burning desert of his own existence. This hope was strengthened by the obvious impression his discourse had made on her. The sparkling intelligence,—the breathless curiosity,—the vivid gratitude of her former expression,—were all extinguished, and her down cast and thoughtful eyes were full of tears.

"Has my conversation wearied you, Immalee?" said he.—"It has grieved me, yet I wish to listen still," answered the Indian. "I love to hear the murmur of the stream, though the crocodile may be beneath the waves."—"Perhaps you wish to encounter the people of this world, so full of crime and misfortune."—"I do, for it is the world you came from, and when

you return to it all will be happy but me." —" And is it, then, in my power to confer happiness?" said her companion; " is it for this purpose I wander among mankind?" A mingled and indefinable expression of derision, malevolence, and despair, overspread his features, as he added, " You do me too much honour, in devising for me an occupation so mild and so congenial to my spirit."

" Immalee, whose eyes were averted, did not see this expression, and she replied, " I know not, but you have taught me the joy of grief; before I saw you I only smiled, but since I saw you, I weep, and my tears are delicious. Oh! they are far different from those I shed for the setting sun, or the faded rose! And yet I know not—" And the poor Indian, oppressed by emotions she could neither understand or express, clasped her hands on her bosom, as if to hide the secret of its new palpitations, and, with the instinctive diffidence of her purity, signified the change of her

feelings, by retiring a few steps from her companion, and casting on the earth eyes which could contain their tears no longer. The stranger appeared troubled,—an emotion new to himself agitated him for a moment,—then a smile of self-disdain curled his lip, as if he reproached himself for the indulgence of human feeling even for a moment. Again his features relaxed, as he turned to the bending and averted form of Immalee, and he seemed like one conscious of agony of soul himself, yet inclined to sport with the agony of another's. This union of inward despair and outward levity is not unnatural. Smiles are the legitimate offspring of happiness, but laughter is often the misbegotten child of madness, that mocks its parent to her face. With such an expression he turned towards her, and asked, "But what is your meaning, Immalee?"—A long pause followed this question, and at length the Indian answered, "I know not," with that natural and delicious art which teaches the

sex to disclose their meaning in words that seem to contradict it. "I know not," means, "I know too well." Her companion understood this, and enjoyed his anticipated triumph. "And why do your tears flow, Immalee?"—"I know not," said the poor Indian, and her tears flowed faster at the question.

"At these words, or rather at these tears, the stranger forgot himself for a moment. He felt that melancholy triumph which the conqueror is unable to enjoy; that triumph which announces a victory over the weakness of others, obtained at the expence of a greater weakness in ourselves. A human feeling, in spite of him, pervaded his whole soul, as he said, in accents of involuntary softness, "What would you have me do, Immalee?" The difficulty of speaking a language that might be at once intelligible and reserved, —that might convey her wishes without betraying her heart,—and the unknown nature of her new emotions, made Im-

malee faulter long before she could answer, "Stay with me,—return not to that world of evil and sorrow.—Here the flowers will always bloom, and the sun be as bright as on the first day I beheld you.—Why will you go back to the world to think and to be unhappy?" The wild and discordant laugh of her companion, startled and silenced her. "Poor girl," he exclaimed, with that mixture of bitterness and commiseration, that at once terrifies and humiliates; "and is this the destiny I am to fulfil?—to listen to the chirping of birds, and watch the opening of buds? Is this to be my lot?" and with another wild burst of unnatural laughter, he flung away the hand which Immalee had extended to him as she had finished her simple appeal.—"Yes, doubtless, I am well fitted for such a fate, and such a partner. Tell me," he added, with still wilder fierceness, "tell me from what line of my features,—from what accent of my voice,—from what sentiment of my discourse,

have you extracted the foundation of a hope that insults me with the view of felicity?" Immalee, who might have replied, "I understand a fury in your words, but not your words," had yet sufficient aid from her maiden pride, and female penetration, to discover that she was rejected by the stranger; and a brief emotion of indignant grief struggled with the tenderness of her exposed and devoted heart. She paused a moment, and then checking her tears, said, in her firmest tones, "Go, then, to your world,—since you wish to be unhappy—go!—Alas! it is not necessary to go there to be unhappy, for I must be so here. Go,—but take with you these roses, for they will all wither when you are gone!—take with you these shells, for I shall no longer love to wear them when you no longer see them!" And as she spoke, with simple, but emphatic action, she untwined from her bosom and hair the shells and flowers with which they were adorned, and threw them at his feet; then turning

to throw one glance of proud and melancholy grief at him, she was retiring. "Stay, Immalee,—stay, and hear me for a moment," said the stranger; and he would, at that moment, have perhaps discovered the ineffable and forbidden secret of his destiny, but Immalee, in silence, which her look of profound grief made eloquent, shook sadly her averted head, and departed.

CHAPTER XVII.

Miseram me omnia terent, et maris sonitus, et scopuli, et solitudo, et sanctitudo Apollinis.

LATIN PLAY.

"MANY days elapsed before the stranger revisited the isle. How he was occupied, or what feelings agitated him in the interval, it would be beyond human conjecture to discover. Perhaps he sometimes exulted in the misery he had inflicted,—perhaps he sometimes pitied it. His stormy mind was like an ocean that had swallowed a thousand wrecks of gallant

ships, and now seemed to dally with the loss of a little slender skiff, that could hardly make way on its surface in the profoundest calm. Impelled, however, by malignity, or tenderness, or curiosity, or weariness of artificial life, so vividly contrasted by the unadulterated existence of Immalee, into whose pure elements nothing but flowers and fragrance, the sparkling of the heavens, and the odours of earth, had transfused their essence—or, possibly, by a motive more powerful than all,—*his own will;* which, never analysed, and hardly ever confessed to be the ruling principle of our actions, governs nine-tenths of them.—He returned to the shore of the haunted isle, the name by which it was distinguished by those who knew not how to classify the new goddess who was supposed to inhabit it, and who were as much puzzled by this new specimen in their theology, as Linnæus himself could have been by a non-descript in botany. Alas! the varieties in moral botany far

exceed the wildest anomalies of those in the natural. However it was, the stranger returned to the isle. But he had to traverse many paths, where human foot but his had never been, and to rend away branches that seemed to tremble at a human touch, and to cross streams into which no foot but his had ever been dipped, before he could discover where Immalee had concealed herself.

" Concealment, however, was not in her thoughts. When he found her, she was leaning against a rock; the ocean was pouring its eternal murmur of waters at her feet; she had chosen the most desolate spot she could find;—there was neither flower or shrub near her;—the calcined rocks, the offspring of volcano—the restless roar of the sea, whose waves almost touched her small foot, that seemed by its heedless protrusion at once to court and neglect danger—these objects were all that surrounded her. The first time he had beheld her, she was embowered amid

flowers and odours, amid all the glorious luxuries of vegetable and animal nature; the roses and the peacocks seemed emulous which should expand their leaves or their plumes, as a shade to that loveliness which seemed to hover between them, alternately borrowing the fragrance of the one, and the hues of the other. Now she stood as if deserted even by nature, whose child she was; the rock was her resting-place, and the ocean seemed the bed where she purposed to rest; she had no shells on her bosom, no roses in her hair—her character seemed to have changed with her feelings; she no longer loved all that is beautiful in nature; she seemed, by an anticipation of her destiny, to make alliance with all that is awful and ominous. She had begun to love the rocks and the ocean, the thunder of the wave, and the sterility of the sand, —awful objects, the incessant recurrence of whose very sound seems intended to remind us of grief and of eternity. Their restless monotony of repetition, corre-

sponds with the beatings of a heart which asks its destiny from the phenomena of nature, and feels the answer is—" Misery."

" Those who love may seek the luxuries of the garden, and inhale added intoxication from its perfumes, which seem the offerings of nature on that altar which is already erected and burning in the heart of the worshipper;—but let those who *have* loved seek the shores of the ocean, and they shall have their answer too.

" There was a sad and troubled air about her, as she stood so lonely, that seemed at once to express the conflict of her internal emotions, and to reflect the gloom and agitation of the physical objects around her; for nature was preparing for one of those awful convulsions—one of those abortive throes of desolation, that seems to announce a more perfect wrath to come; and while it blasts the vegetation, and burns up the soil of some visited portion, seems to proclaim in the

murmur of its receding thunders, that it will return in that day, when the universe shall pass away as a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat, and return to fulfil the dreadful promise, which its partial and initiatory devastation has left incomplete. Is there a peal of thunder that does not mutter a menace, "For *me*, the dissolution of the world is reserved, I depart, but I shall return?" Is there a flash of lightning that does not say, *visibly*, if not audibly, "Sinner, I cannot now penetrate the recesses of your soul; but how will you encounter my glare, when the hand of the judge is armed with me, and my penetrating glance displays you to the view of assembled worlds?"

"The evening was very dark; heavy clouds, rolling on like the forces of an hostile army, obscured the horizon from east to west. There was a bright but ghastly blue in the heaven above, like that in the

eye of the dying, where the last forces of life are collected, while its powers are rapidly forsaking the frame, and feeling their extinguishment must shortly be. There was not a breath of air to heave the ocean,—the trees drooped without a whisper to woo their branches or their buds,—the birds had retired, with that instinct which teaches them to avoid the fearful encounter of the elements, and nestled with cowering wings and drooping heads among their favourite trees. There was not a human sound in the isle; the very rivulet seemed to tremble at its own tinklings, and its small waves flowed as if a subterranean hand arrested and impeded their motion. Nature, in these grand and terrific operations, seems in some degree to assimilate herself to a parent, whose most fearful denunciations are preceded by an awful silence, or rather to a judge, whose final sentence is *felt* with less horror than the pause that intervenes before it is pronounced.

"Immalee gazed on the awful scene by which she was surrounded, without any emotion derived from physical causes. To her, light and darkness had hitherto been the same; she loved the sun for its lustre, and the lightning for its transitory brilliancy, and the ocean for its sonorous music, and the tempest for the agitation which it gave to the trees, under whose bending and welcoming shadow she danced, in time kept by the murmur of their leaves, that hung low, as if to crown their votarist. And she loved the night, when all was still, but what she was accustomed to call the music of a thousand streams, that made the stars rise from their beds, to sparkle and nod to that wild melody.

"Such she had been. Now, her eye was intently fixed on the declining light, and the approaching darkness,—that preternatural gloom, that seems to say to the brightest and most beautiful of the works of God, "Give place to me, thou shalt shine no more."

" The darkness increased, and the clouds collected like an army that had mustered its utmost force, and stood in obdured and collected strength against the struggling light of heaven. A broad, red, and dusky line of gloomy light, gathered round the horizon, like an usurper watching the throne of an abdicated sovereign, and expanding its portentous circle, sent forth alternately flashes of lightning, pale and red;—the murmur of the sea increased, and the arcades of the banyan-tree, that had struck its patriarchal root not five hundred paces from where Immalee stood, resounded the deep and almost unearthly murmur of the approaching storm through all its colonnades ; the primeval trunk rocked and groaned, and the everlasting fibres seemed to withdraw their grasp from the earth, and quiver in air at the sound. Nature, with every voice she could inspire from earth, or air, or water, announced danger to her children.

" That was the moment the stranger

chose to approach Immalee; of danger he was insensible, of fear he was unconscious; his miserable destiny had exempted him from both, but what had it left him? No hope—but that of plunging others into his own condemnation. No fear—but that his victim might escape him. Yet with all his diabolical heartlessness, he *did* feel some relentings of his human nature, as he beheld the young Indian; her cheek was pale, but her eye was fixed, and her figure, turned from him, (as if she preferred to encounter the tremendous rage of the storm), seemed to him to say, "Let me fall into the hands of God, and not into those of man."

"This attitude, so unintentionally assumed by Immalee, and so little expressive of her real feelings, restored all the malignant energies of the stranger's feelings; the former evil purposes of his heart, and the habitual character of his dark and fiendish pursuit, rushed back on him. Amid this contrasted scene of the convul-

sive rage of nature, and the passive helplessness of her unsheltered loveliness, he felt a glow of excitement, like that which pervaded him, when the fearful powers of his " charmed life" enabled him to penetrate the cells of a madhouse, or the dungeons of an Inquisition.

" He saw this pure being surrounded by the terrors of nature, and felt a wild and terrible conviction, that though the lightning might blast her in a moment, yet there was a bolt more burning and more fatal, which was wielded by his own hand, and which, if he could aim it aright, must transfix her very soul.

" Armed with all his malignity and all his power, he approached Immalee, armed only with her purity, and standing like the reflected beam of the last ray of light on whose extinction she was gazing. There was a contrast in her form and her situation, that might have touched any feelings but those of the wanderer.

" The light of her figure shining out a-

mid the darkness that enveloped her,—its undulating softness rendered still softer to the eye by the rock against which it reclined,—its softness, brightness, and flexibility, presenting a kind of playful hostility to the tremendous aspect of nature overcharged with wrath and ruin.

"The stranger approached her unobserved; his steps were unheard amid the rush of the ocean, and the deep, portentous murmur of the elements; but, as he advanced, he heard sounds that perhaps operated on his feelings as the whispers of Eve to her flowers on the organs of the serpent. Both knew their power, and felt their time. Amid the fast approaching terrors of a storm, more terrible than any she had ever witnessed, the poor Indian, unconscious, or perhaps insensible of its dangers, was singing her wild song of desperation and love to the echoes of the advancing storm. Some words of this strain of despair and passion reached the ear of the stranger. They were thus:

"The night is growing dark—but what is that to the darkness that his absence has cast on my soul? The lightnings are glancing round me—but what are they to the gleam of his eye when he parted from me in anger?

"I lived but in the light of his presence—why should I not die when that light is withdrawn? Anger of the clouds, what have I to fear from you? You may scorch me to dust, as I have seen you scorch the branches of the eternal trees—but the trunk still remained, and my heart will be his for ever.

"Roar on, terrible ocean! thy waves, which I cannot count, can never wash his image from my soul,—thou dashest a thousand waves against a rock, but the rock is unmoved—and so would be my heart amid the calamities of the world with which he threatens me,—whose dangers I never would have known but for him, and whose dangers for him I will encounter."

"She paused in her wild song, and then

renewed it, regardless alike of the terrors of the elements, and the possible presence of one whose subtle and poisonous potency was more fatal than all the elements in their united wrath.

"When we first met, my bosom was covered with roses—now it is shaded with the dark leaves of the ocynum. When he saw me first, the living things all loved me—now I care not whether they love me or not—I have forgot to love them. When he came to the isle every night, I hoped the moon would be bright—now I care not whether she rises or sets, whether she is clouded or bright. Before he came, every thing loved me, and I had more things to love than I could reckon by the hairs of my head—now I feel I can love but one, and that one has deserted me. Since I have seen him all things have changed. The flowers have not the colours they once had—there is no music in the flow of the waters—the stars do not

smile on me from heaven as they did,—and I myself begin to love the storm better than the calm."

"As she ended her melancholy strain, she turned from the spot where the increasing fury of the storm made it no longer possible for her to stand, and turning, met the gaze of the stranger fixed on her. A suffusion, the most rich and vivid, mantled over her from brow to bosom; she did not utter her usual exclamation of joy at his sight, but, with averted eyes and faultering step, followed him as he pointed her to seek shelter amid the ruins of the pagoda. They approached it in silence; and, amid the convulsions and fury of nature, it was singular to see two beings walk on together without exchanging a word of apprehension, or feeling a thought of danger,—the one armed by despair, the other by innocence. Immalee would rather have sought the shelter of her favourite banyan-tree, but the stranger tried to make her comprehend, that her danger

would be much greater there than in the spot he pointed out to her. "Danger!" said the Indian, while a bright and wild smile irradiated her features; "can there be danger when you are near me?"—"Is there, then, no danger in my presence?—few have met me without dreading, and without feeling it too!" and his countenance, as he spoke, grew darker than the heaven at which he scowled. "Immalee," he added, in a voice still deeper and more thrilling, from the unwonted operation of human emotion in its tones; "Immalee, you cannot be weak enough to believe that I have power of controuling the elements? If I had," he continued, "by the heaven that is frowning at me, the first exertion of my power should be to collect the most swift and deadly of the lightnings that are hissing around us, and transfix you where you stand!"—"Me?" repeated the trembling Indian, her cheek growing paler at his words, and the voice in which they were uttered, than at the redoubling

fury of the storm, amid whose pauses she scarce heard them.—" Yes—you—you—lovely as you are, and innocent, and pure, before a fire more deadly consumes your existence, and drinks your heart-blood—before you are longer exposed to a danger a thousand times more fatal than those with which the elements menace you—the danger of my accursed and miserable presence!"

" Immalee, unconscious of his meaning, but trembling with impassioned grief at the agitation with which he spoke, approached him to soothe the emotion of which she knew neither the name or the cause. Through the fractures of the ruin the red and ragged lightnings disclosed, from time to time, a glimpse of her figure,—her dishevelled hair,—her pallid and appealing look,—her locked hands, and the imploring bend of her slight form, as if she was asking pardon for a crime of which she was unconscious,—and soliciting an interest in griefs not her own. All around

her wild, unearthly, and terrible,—the floor strewed with fragments of stone, and mounds of sand,—the vast masses of ruined architecture, whose formation seemed the work of no human hand, and whose destruction appeared the sport of demons,—the yawning fissures of the arched and ponderous roof, through which heaven darkened and blazed alternately with a gloom that wrapt every thing, or a light more fearful than that gloom.—All around her gave to her form, when it it was momently visible, a relief so strong and so touching, that it might have immortalized the hand who had sketched her as the embodied presence of an angel who had descended to the regions of woe and wrath,—of darkness and of fire, on a message of reconciliation,—and descended in vain.

"The stranger threw on her, as she bent before him, one of those looks that, but her own, no mortal eye had yet encountered unappalled. Its expression seemed only to inspire a higher feeling of

devotedness in the victim. Perhaps an involuntary sentiment of terror mingled itself with that expression, as this beautiful being sunk on her knees before her writhing and distracted enemy; and, by the silent supplication of her attitude, seemed to implore him to have mercy on himself. As the lightnings flashed around her,—as the earth trembled beneath her white and slender feet,—as the elements seemed all sworn to the destruction of every living thing, and marched on from heaven to the accomplishment of their purpose, with *Væ victis* written and legible to every eye, in the broad unfolded banners of that resplendent and sulphurous light that seemed to display the *day of hell*—the feelings of the devoted Indian seemed concentrated on the ill-chosen object of their idolatry alone. Her graduating attitudes beautifully, but painfully, expressed the submission of a female heart devoted to its object, to his frailties, his passions, and his very crimes. When subdued by the image

of power, which the mind of man exercises over that of woman, that impulse becomes irresistibly humiliating. Immalee had at first bowed to conciliate her beloved, and her spirit had taught her frame that first inclination. In her next stage of suffering, she had sunk on her knees, and, remaining at a distance from him, she had trusted to this state of prostration to produce that effect on his heart which those who love always hope *compassion* may produce,—that illegitimate child of love, often more cherished than its parent. In her last efforts she clung to his hand—she pressed her pale lips to it, and was about to utter a few words—her voice failed her, but her fast dropping tears *spoke* to the hand which she held,—and its grasp, which for a moment convulsively returned hers, and then flung it away, answered her.

"The Indian remained prostrate and aghast. "Immalee," said the stranger, in a struggling voice, "Do you wish me to

tell you the feelings with which my presence should inspire you?"—"No—no—no!" said the Indian, applying her white and delicate hands to her ears, and then clasping them on her bosom; "I feel them too much."—"Hate me—curse me!" said the stranger, not heeding her, and stamping till the reverberation of his steps on the hollow and loosened stones almost contended with the thunder; "hate me, for I hate you—I hate all things that live—all things that are dead—I am myself hated and hateful!"—"Not by me," said the poor Indian, feeling, through the blindness of her tears, for his averted hand. "Yes, by you, if you knew whose I am, and whom I serve." Immalee aroused her newly-excited energies of heart and intellect to answer this appeal. "Who you are, I know not—but I am yours.—Whom you serve, I know not—but him will *I* serve—I will be yours for ever. Forsake me if you will, but when I am dead, come back to this isle, and say to

yourself, The roses have bloomed and faded—the streams have flowed and been dried up—the rocks have been removed from their places—and the lights of heaven have altered in their courses,—but there was one who never changed, and she is not here!"

"As she spoke the enthusiasm of passion struggling with grief, she added, "You have told me you possess the happy art of writing thought.—Do not write one thought on my grave, for one word traced by your hand would revive me. Do not weep, for one tear would make me live again, perhaps to draw a tear from you."—"Immalee!" said the stranger. The Indian looked up, and, with a mingled feeling of grief, amazement, and compunction, beheld him shed tears. The next moment he dashed them away with the hand of despair; and, grinding his teeth, burst into that wild shriek of bitter and convulsive laughter that announces the object of its derision is ourselves.

" Immalee, whose feelings were almost exhausted, trembled in silence at his feet. " Hear me, wretched girl!" he cried in tones that seemed alternately tremulous with malignity and compassion, with habitual hostility and involuntary softness; " hear me! I know the secret sentiment you struggle with better than the innocent heart of which it is the inmate knows it. Suppress, banish, destroy it. Crush it as you would a young reptile before its growth had made it loathsome to the eye, and poisonous to existence!"—" I never crushed even a reptile in my life," answered Immalee, unconscious that this matter-of-fact answer was equally applicable in another sense. " You love, then," said the stranger; " but," after a long and ominous pause, " do you know whom it is you love?"—" You!" said the Indian, with that purity of truth that consecrates the impulse it yields to, and would blush more for the sophistications of art than the confidence of nature; " you! You have taught

me to think, to feel, and to weep."—"And you love me for this?" said her companion, with an expression half irony, half commiseration. "Think, Immalee, for a moment, how unsuitable, how unworthy, is the object of the feelings you lavish on him. A being unattractive in his form, repulsive in his habits, separated from life and humanity by a gulph impassable; a disinherited child of nature, who goes about to curse or to tempt his more prosperous brethren; one who——what withholds me from disclosing all?"

"At this moment a flash of such vivid and terrific brightness as no human sight could sustain, gleamed through the ruins, pouring through every fissure instant and intolerable light. Immalee, overcome by terror and emotion, remained on her knees, her hands closely clasped over her aching eyes.

"For a few moments that she remained thus, she thought she heard other sounds near her, and that the stranger was

answering a voice that spoke to him. She heard him say, as the thunder rolled to a distance, " This hour is mine, not thine—begone, and trouble me not." When she looked up again, all trace of human emotion was gone from his expression. The dry and burning eye of despair that he fixed on her, seemed never to have owned a tear; the hand with which he grasped her, seemed never to have felt the flow of blood, or the throb of a pulse; amid the intense and increasing heat of an atmosphere that appeared on fire, its touch was as cold as that of the dead.

" Mercy!" cried the trembling Indian, as she in vain endeavoured to read a human feeling in those eyes of stone, to which her own tearful and appealing ones were uplifted—" mercy!" And while she uttered the word, she knew not what she deprecated or dreaded.

" The stranger answered not a word, relaxed not a muscle; it seemed as if he felt her not with the hands that grasped

her,—as if he saw her not with the eyes that glared fixedly and coldly on her. He bore, or rather dragged, her to the vast arch that had once been the entrance to the pagoda, but which, now shattered and ruinous, resembled more the gulphing yawn of a cavern that harbours the inmates of the desert, than a work wrought by the hands of man, and devoted to the worship of a deity. "You have called for mercy," said her companion, in a voice that froze her blood even under the burning atmosphere, whose air she could scarce respire. "You have cried for mercy, and mercy you shall have. Mercy has not been dealt to me, but I have courted my horrible destiny, and my reward is just and sure. Look forth, trembler—look forth,—I command thee!" And he stamped with an air of authority and impatience that completed the terror of the delicate and impassioned being who shuddered in his grasp, and felt half-dead at his frown.

"In obedience to his command, she re-

moved the long tresses of her auburn hair, which had vainly swept, in luxuriant and fruitless redundance, the rock on which the steps of him she adored had been fixed. With that mixture of the docility of the child, and the mild submission of woman, she attempted to comply with his demand, but her eyes, filled with tears, could not encounter the withering horrors of the scene before her. She wiped those brilliant eyes with hairs that were every day bathed in the pure and crystal lymph, and seemed, as she tried to gaze on the desolation, like some bright and shivering spirit, who, for its further purification, or perhaps for the enlargement of the knowledge necessary for its destination, is compelled to witness some evidence of the Almighty's wrath, unintelligible in its first operations, but doubtless salutary in its final results.

"Thus looking and thus feeling, Imnalee shudderingly approached the entrance of that building, which, blending

the ruins of nature with those of art, seemed to announce the power of desolation over both, and to intimate that the primeval rock, untouched and unmodulated by human hands, and thrown upwards perhaps by some volcanic eruption, perhaps deposited there by some meteoric discharge, and the gigantic columns of stone, whose erection had been the work of two centuries,—were alike dust beneath the feet of that tremendous conqueror, whose victories alone are without noise and without resistance, and the progress of whose triumph is marked by tears instead of blood.

"Immalee, as she gazed around her, felt, for the first time, terror at the aspect of nature. Formerly, she had considered all its phenomena as equally splendid or terrific. And her childish though active imagination, seemed to consecrate alike the sun-light and the storm to the devotion of a heart, on whose pure

altar the flowers and the fires of nature flung their undivided offering.

" But since she had seen the stranger, new emotions had pervaded her young heart. She learned to weep and to fear; and perhaps she saw, in the fearful aspect of the heavens, the developement of that mysterious terror, which always trembles at the bottom of the hearts of those who dare to love.

" How often does nature thus become an involuntary interpreter between us and our feelings! Is the murmur of the ocean without a meaning?—Is the roll of the thunder without a voice?—Is the blasted spot on which the rage of both has been exhausted without its lesson?—Do not they all tell us some mysterious secret, which we have in vain searched our hearts for?—Do we not find in them, an answer to those questions with which we are for ever importuning the mute oracle of our destiny?—Alas! how deceitful and inade-

quate we feel the language of man, after love and grief have made us acquainted with that of nature!—the only one, perhaps, capable of a corresponding sign for those emotions, under which all human expression faints. What a difference between *words without meaning*, and that *meaning without words*, which the sublime phenomena of nature, the rocks and the ocean, the moon and the twilight, convey to those who have "ears to hear."

"How eloquent of truth is nature in her very silence! How fertile of reflections amid her profoundest desolations! But the desolation now presented to the eyes of Immalee, was that which is calculated to cause terror, not reflection. Earth and heaven, the sea and the dry land, seemed mingling together, and about to replunge into chaos. The ocean, deserting its eternal bed, dashed its waves, whose white surf gleamed through the darkness, far into the shores of the isle. They came on

like the crests of a thousand warriors, plumed and tossing in their pride, and, like them, perishing in the moment of victory. There was a fearful inversion of the natural appearance of earth and sea, as if all the barriers of nature were broken, and all her laws reversed.

The waves deserting their station, left, from time to time, the sands as dry as those of the desert; and the trees and shrubs tossed and heaved in ceaseless agitation, like the waves of a midnight storm. There was no light, but a livid grey that sickened the eye to behold, except when the bright red lightning burst out like the eye of a fiend, glancing over the work of ruin, and closing as it beheld it completed.

"Amid this scene stood two beings, one whose appealing loveliness seemed to have found favour with the elements even in their wrath, and one whose fearless and obdurate eye appeared to defy them. "Immalee," he cried, "is this a place or an hour to talk of love!—all nature is ap-

palled—heaven is dark—the animals have hid themselves—and the very shrubs, as they wave and shrink, seem alive with terror."—" It is an hour to implore protection," said the Indian, clinging to him timidly. " Look up," said the stranger, while his own fixed and fearless eye seemed to return flash for flash to the baffled and insulted elements; " Look up, and if you cannot resist the impulses of your heart, let me at least point out a fitter object for them. Love," he cried, extending his arm towards the dim and troubled sky, " love the storm in its might of destruction—seek alliance with those swift and perilous travellers of the groaning air,—the meteor that rends, and the thunder that shakes it! Court, for sheltering tenderness, those masses of dense and rolling cloud,—the baseless mountains of heaven! Woo the kisses of the fiery lightnings, to quench themselves on your smouldering bosom! Seek all that is terrible in nature for your companions

and your lover!—woo them to burn and blast you—perish in their fierce embrace, and you will be happier, far happier, than if you lived in mine! *Lived!*—Oh who can be mine and live! Hear me, Immalee!" he cried, while he held her hands locked in his—while his eyes, rivetted on her, sent forth a light of intolerable lustre—while a new feeling of indefinite enthusiasm seemed for a moment to thrill his whole frame, and new-modulate the tone of his nature; "Hear me! If you will be mine, it must be amid a scene like this for ever—amid fire and darkness—amid hatred and despair—amid——" and his voice swelling to a demoniac shriek of rage and horror, and his arms extended, as if to grapple with the fearful objects of some imaginary struggle, he was rushing from the arch under which they stood, lost in the picture which his guilt and despair had drawn, and whose images he was for ever doomed to behold.

"The slender form that had clung to

him was, by this sudden movement, prostrated at his feet; and, with a voice choaked with terror, yet with that perfect devotedness which never issued but from the heart and lip of woman, she answered his frightful questions with the simple demand, "*Will you be there?*"—"Yes!—THERE I must be, and for ever! And *will* you, and *dare* you, be with me?" And a kind of wild and terrible energy nerved his frame, and strengthened his voice, as he spoke and cowered over pale and prostrate loveliness, that seemed in profound and reckless humiliation to court its own destruction, as it a dove exposed its breast, without flight or struggle, to the beak of a vulture. "Well, then," said the stranger, while a brief convulsion crossed his pale visage, "amid thunder I wed thee—bride of perdition! mine shalt thou be for ever! Come, and let us attest our nuptials before the reeling altar of nature, with the lightnings of heaven for our bed-lights, and the curse of nature for our marriage-

benediction!" The Indian shrieked in terror, not at his words, which she did not understand, but at the expression which accompanied them. "Come," he repeated, "while the darkness yet is witness to our ineffable and eternal union." Immalee, pale, terrified, but resolute, retreated from him."

"At this moment the storm, which had obscured the heavens and ravaged the earth, passed away with the rapidity common in those climates, where the visitation of an hour does its work of destruction unimpeded, and is instantly succeeded by the smiling lights and brilliant skies of which mortal curiosity in vain asks the question, Whether they gleam in triumph or in consolation over the mischief they witness?

"As the stranger spoke, the clouds passed away, carrying their diminished burden of wrath and terror where sufferings were to be inflicted, and terrors to be undergone, by the natives of other

climes—and the bright moon burst forth with a glory unknown in European climes. The heavens were as blue as the waves of the ocean, which they seemed to reflect; and the stars burst forth with a kind of indignant and aggravated brilliancy, as if they resented the usurpation of the storm, and asserted the eternal predominance of nature over the casual influences of the storms that obscured her. Such, perhaps, will be the developement of the moral world. We shall be told why we suffered, and for what; but a bright and blessed lustre shall follow the storm, and all shall yet be light.

"The young Indian caught from this object an omen alike auspicious to her imagination and her heart. She burst from him—she rushed into the light of nature, whose glory seemed like the promise of redemption, gleaming amid the darkness of the fall. She pointed to the moon, that sun of the eastern nights, whose broad

and brilliant light fell like a mantle of glory over rock and ruin, over tree and flower.

" Wed me by this light," cried Immalee, " and I will be yours for ever!" And her beautiful countenance reflected the full light of the glorious planet that rode bright through the cloudless heaven—and her white and naked arms, extended towards it, seemed like two pure attesting pledges of the union. " Wed me by this light," she repeated, sinking on her knees, " and I will be yours for ever!"

" As she spoke, the stranger approached, moved with what feelings no mortal thought can discover. At that moment a trifling phenomenon interfered to alter her destiny. A darkened cloud at that moment covered the moon—it seemed as if the departed storm collected in wrathful haste the last dark fold of its tremendous drapery, and was about to pass away for ever.

" The eyes of the stranger flashed on Immalee the brightest rays of mingled

fondness and ferocity. He pointed to the darkness,—"WED ME BY THIS LIGHT!" he exclaimed, "*and you shall be mine for ever and ever!*" Immalee, shuddering at the grasp in which he held her, and trying in vain to watch the expression of his countenance, yet felt enough of her danger to tear herself from him. "Farewell for ever!" exclaimed the stranger, as he rushed from her.

"Immalee, exhausted by emotion and terror, had fallen senseless on the sands that filled the path to the ruined pagoda. He returned—he raised her in his arms—her long dark hair streamed over them like the drooping banners of a defeated army—her arms sunk down as if declining the support they seemed to implore—her cold and colourless cheek rested on his shoulder.

"Is she dead?" he murmured. "Well, be it so—let her perish—let her be any thing *but mine!*" He flung his senseless burden on the sands, and departed—nor did he ever revisit the island.

CHAPTER XVII.

Que donne le monde aux siens plus souvent,
Echo *Vent.*
Que dois-je vaincre ici, sans jamais relacher,
Echo *la chair.*
Qui fit le cause des maux, qui me sont survenus,
Echo *Venus.*
Que faut dire après d'une telle infidelle,
Echo *Fi d'elle.*

MAGDALENIADE, *by Father Pierre de St Louis.*

" THREE years had elapsed since the parting of Immalee and the stranger, when one evening the attention of some Spanish gentlemen, who were walking in a public place in Madrid, was arrested by a figure that passed them, habited in the dress of

the country, (only without a sword), and walking very slowly. They stopt by a kind of simultaneous movement, and seemed to ask each other, with silent looks, what had been the cause of the impression this person's appearance had made on them. There was nothing remarkable in his figure,—his demeanour was quiet; it was the singular expression of his countenance which had struck them with a sensation they could neither define or account for.

"As they paused, the person returned alone, and walking slowly—and they again encountered that singular expression of the features, (the eyes particularly), which no human glance could meet unappalled. Accustomed to look on and converse with all things revolting to nature and to man, —for ever exploring the mad-house, the jail, or the Inquisition,—the den of famine, the dungeon of crime, or the death-bed of despair,—his eyes had acquired a light and a language of their own—a light that none

could gaze on, and a language that few dare understand.

"As he passed slowly by them, they observed two others whose attention was apparently fixed on the same singular object, for they stood pointing after him, and speaking to each other with gestures of strong and obvious emotion. The curiosity of the groupe for once overcame the restraint of Spanish reserve, and approaching the two cavaliers, they inquired if the singular personage who had passed was not the subject of their conversation, and the cause of the emotion which appeared to accompany it. The others replied in the affirmative, and hinted at their knowledge of circumstances in the character and history of that extraordinary being that might justify even stronger marks of emotion at his presence. This hint operated still more strongly on their curiosity—the circle of listeners began to deepen. Some of them, it appeared, had, or pretended to have, some information relative

to this extraordinary subject. And that kind of desultory conversation commenced, whose principal ingredients are a plentiful proportion of ignorance, curiosity, and fear, mingled with some small allowance of information and truth;—that conversation, vague, unsatisfactory, but not uninteresting, to which every speaker is welcome to contribute his share of baseless report,—wild conjecture,—anecdote the more incredible the better credited,—and conclusion the more falsely drawn the more likely to carry home conviction.

"The conversation passed very much in language incoherent as this:—"But why, if he be what he is described, what he is known to be,—why is he not seized by order of government?—why is he not immured in the Inquisition?"—"He has been often in the prison of the holy office—oftener, perhaps, than the holy fathers wished," said another. "But it is a well-known fact, that whatever transpired on his examination, he was liberated almost

immediately." Another added, "That the stranger had been in almost every prison in Europe, but had always contrived either to defeat or defy the power in whose grasp he appeared to be inclosed,—and to be active in his purposes of mischief in the remotest parts of Europe at the moment he was supposed to be expiating them in others." Another demanded, "If it was known to what country he belonged?" and was answered, "He is said to be a native of Ireland—(a country that no one knows, and which the natives are particularly reluctant to dwell in from various causes)—and his name is Melmoth." The Spaniard had great difficulty in expressing the *theta*, unpronounceable by continental lips. "Another, who had an appearance of more intelligence than the rest, added the extraordinary fact of the stranger's being seen in various and distant parts of the earth within a time in which no power merely human could be supposed to traverse them—that his marked and fearful

habit was every where to seek out the most wretched, or the most profligate, of the community among which he flung himself—what was his object in seeking them was unknown."—"It is well known," said a deep-toned voice, falling on the ears of the startled listeners like the toll of a strong but muffled bell,—"it is well known both to him and them."

"It was now twilight, but the eyes of all could distinguish the figure of the stranger as he passed; and some even averred they could see the ominous lustre of those eyes which never rose on human destiny but as planets of woe. The groupe paused for some time to watch the retreat of the figure that had produced on them the effect of the torpedo. It departed slowly,—no one offered it molestation.

"I have heard," said one of the company, "that a delicious music precedes the approach of this person when his destined victim,—the being whom he is permitted to tempt or to torture,—is about to

appear or to approach him. I have heard a strange tale of such music being heard; and—Holy Mary be our guide! did you ever hear such sounds?"—"Where—what?—" and the astonished listeners took off their hats, unclasped their mantles, "opened their lips, and drew in their breath," in delicious ecstasy at the sounds that floated round them. "No wonder," said a young gallant of the party, "no wonder that such sounds harbinger the approach of a being so heavenly. She deals with the good spirits; and the blessed saints alone could send such music from above to welcome her. As he spoke, all eyes were turned to a figure, which, though moving among a groupe of brilliant and attractive females, appeared the only one among them on whom the eye could rest with pure and undivided light and love. She did not catch observation—observation caught her, and was proud of its prize.

At the approach of a large party of fe-

males, there was all that anxious and flattering preparation among the cavaliers,—all that eager arrangement of capas, and hats, and plumes,—that characterized the manners of a nation still half-feudal, and always gallant and chivalrous. These preliminary movements were answered by corresponding ones on the part of the fair and fatal host approaching. The creaking of their large fans—the tremulous and purposely-delayed adjustment of their floating veils, whose partial concealment flattered the imagination beyond the most full and ostentatious disclosure of the charms they seemed jealous of—the folds of the mantilla, of whose graceful falls, and complicated manœuvres, and coquettish undulations, the Spanish women know how to avail themselves so well—all these announced an attack, which the cavaliers, according to the modes of gallantry in that day (1683), were well prepared to meet and parry.

"But, amid the bright host that advan-

ced against them, there was one whose arms were not artificial, and the effect of whose singular and simple attractions made a strong contrast to the studied arrangements of her associates. If her fan moved, it was only to collect air—if she arranged her veil, it was only to hide her face—if she adjusted her mantilla, it was but to hide that form, whose exquisite symmetry defied the voluminous drapery of even that day to conceal it. Men of the loosest gallantry fell back as she approached, with involuntary awe—the libertine who looked on her was half-converted—the susceptible beheld her as one who realized that vision of imagination that must never be embodied here—and the unfortunate as one whose sight alone was consolation—the old, as they gazed on her, dreamt of their youth—and the young for the first time dreamt of love—the only love which deserves the name—that which purity alone can inspire, and perfect purity alone can reward.

"As she mingled among the gay groupes that filled the place, one might observe a certain air that distinguished her from every female there,—not by pretension to superiority, (of that her unequalled loveliness must have acquitted her, even to the vainest of the groupe), but by an untainted, unsophisticated character, diffusing itself over look and motion, and even thought—turning wildness into grace—giving an emphasis to a single exclamation, that made polished sentences sound trifling—for ever trespassing against etiquette with vivid and fearless enthusiasm, and apologizing the next moment with such timid and graceful repentance, that one doubted whether the offence or the apology were most delightful.

"She presented altogether a singular contrast to the measured tones, the mincing gait, and the organized uniformity of dress, and manner, and look, and feeling, of the females about her. The harness of art was upon every limb and feature from

their birth, and its trappings concealed or crippled every movement which nature had designed for graceful. But in the movement of this young female, there was a bounding elasticity, a springiness, a luxuriant and conscious vitality, that made every action the expression of thought; and then, as she shrunk from the disclosure, made it the more exquisite interpreter of feeling. There was around her a mingled light of innocence and majesty, never united but in *her* sex. Men may long retain, and even confirm, the character of power which nature has stamped on their frames, but they very soon forfeit their claim to the expression of innocence.

" Amid the vivid and eccentric graces of a form that seemed like a comet in the world of beauty, bound by no laws, or by laws that she alone understood and obeyed, there was a shade of melancholy, that, to a superficial observer, seemed transitory and assumed, perhaps as a studied relief to the glowing colours of a picture so brilliant,

but which, to other eyes, announced, that with all the energies of intellect occupied, —with all the instincts of sense excited,— the heart had as yet no inmate, and wanted one.

" The groupe who had been conversing about the stranger, felt their attention irresistibly attracted by this object; and the low murmur of their fearful whispers was converted into broken exclamations of delight and wonder, as the fair vision passed them. She had not long done so, when the stranger was seen slowly returning, seeming, as before, known to all, but knowing none. As the female party turned, they encountered him. His emphatic glance selected and centered in one alone. She saw him too, recognized him, and, uttering a wild shriek, fell on the earth senseless.

" The tumult occasioned by this accident, which so many witnessed, and none knew the cause of, for some moments drew off the attention of all from the stranger—

all were occupied either in assisting or inquiring after the lady who had fainted. She was borne to her carriage by more assistants than she needed or wished for—and just as she was lifted into it, the voice of some one near her uttered the word "Immalee!" She recognized the voice, and turned, with a look of anguish and a feeble cry, towards the direction from which it proceeded. Those around her had heard the sound,—but as they did not understand its meaning, or know to whom it was addressed, they ascribed the lady's emotion to indisposition, and hastened to place her in her carriage. It drove away, but the stranger pursued its course with his eyes—the company dispersed, he remained alone—twilight faded into darkness—he appeared not to notice the change—a few still continued lingering at the extremity of the walk to mark him—they were wholly unmarked by him.

"One who remained the longest said, that he saw him use the action of one who

wipes away a tear hastily. To his eyes the tear of penitence was denied for ever. Could this have been the tear of passion? If so, how much woe did it announce to its object!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oh what was love made for, if 'tis not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame!
I know not, I ask not, what guilt's in thine heart,
I but know I must love thee, whatever thou art.

MOORE.

"THE next day, the young female who had excited so much interest the preceding evening, was to quit Madrid, to pass a few weeks at a villa belonging to her family, at a short distance from the city. That family, including all the company, consisted of her mother Donna Clara di Aliaga, the wife of a wealthy merchant,

who was monthly expected to return from the Indies; her brother Don Fernan di Aliaga, and several servants; for these wealthy citizens, conscious of their opulence and formerly high descent, piqued themselves upon travelling with no less ceremony and pompous tardiness than accompanied the progress of a grandee. So the old square-built, lumbering carriage, moved on like a hearse; the coachman sat fast asleep on the box; and the six black horses crawled at a pace like the progress of time when he visits affliction. Beside the carriage rode Fernan di Aliaga and his servants, with umbrellas and huge spectacles; and within it were placed Donna Clara and her daughter. The interior of this arrangement was the counterpart of its external appearance,—all announced dullness, formality, and withering monotony.

"Donna Clara was a woman of a cold and grave temper, with all the solemnity of a Spaniard, and all the austerity of a

bigot. Don Fernan presented that union of fiery passion and saturnic manners not unusual among Spaniards. His dull and selfish pride was wounded by the recollection of his family having been in trade; and, looking on the unrivalled beauty of his sister as a possible means of his obtaining an alliance with a family of rank, he viewed her with that kind of selfish partiality as little honourable to him who feels it, as to her who was its object.

"And it was amid such beings that the vivid and susceptible Immalee, the daughter of nature, "the gay creature of the elements," was doomed to wither away the richly-coloured and exquisitely-scented flower of an existence so ungenially transplanted. Her singular destiny seemed to have removed her from a physical wilderness, to place her in a moral one. And, perhaps, her last state was worse than her first.

"It is certain that the gloomiest prospect presents nothing so chilling as the as-

pect of human faces, in which we try in vain to trace one corresponding expression; and the sterility of nature itself is luxury compared to the sterility of human hearts, which communicate all the desolation they feel.

"They had been some time on their way, when Donna Clara, who never spoke till after a long preface of silence, perhaps to give what she said a weight it might otherwise have wanted, said, with oracular deliberation, "Daughter, I hear you fainted in the public walks last night—did you meet with any thing that surprised or terrified you?"—"No, Madam."—"What, then, could be the cause of the emotion you betrayed at the sight, as I am told—I know nothing—of a personage of extraordinary demeanour?"—"Oh, I cannot, dare not tell!" said Isidora, dropping her veil over her burning cheek. Then the irrepressible ingenuousness of her former nature, rushing over her heart and frame like a flood, she sunk from the cushion on which

she sat at Donna Clara's feet, exclaiming, "Oh, mother, I will tell you all!"—"No!" said Donna Clara, repelling her with a cold feeling of offended pride; "no!—there is no occasion. I seek no confidence withheld and bestowed in the same breath; nor do I like these violent emotions—they are unmaidenly. Your duties as a child are easily understood—they are merely perfect obedience, profound submission, and unbroken silence, except when you are addressed by me, your brother, or Father Jose. Surely no duties were ever more easily performed—rise, then, and cease to weep. If your conscience disturbs you, accuse yourself to Father Jose, who will, no doubt, inflict a penance proportioned to the enormity of your offence. I trust only he will not err on the side of indulgence." And so saying, Donna Clara, who had never uttered so long a speech before, reclined back on her cushion, and began to tell her beads with much devotion, till the arrival of the carriage at its

destination awoke her from a profound and peaceful sleep.

"It was near noon, and dinner in a cool low apartment near the garden awaited only the approach of Father Jose, the confessor. He arrived at length. He was a man of an imposing figure, mounted on a stately mule. His features, at first view, bore strong traces of thought; but, on closer examination, those traces seemed rather the result of physical conformation, than of any intellectual exercise. The channel was open, but the stream had not been directed there. However, though defective in education, and somewhat narrow in mind, Father Jose was a good man, and meant well. He loved power, and he was devoted to the interests of the Catholic church; but he had frequently doubts, (which he kept to himself), of the absolute necessity of celibacy, and he felt (strange effect!) a chill all over him when he heard of the fires of an *auto da fe*. Dinner was concluded; the fruit and

wine, the latter untasted by the females, were on the table,—the choicest of them placed before Father Jose,—when Isidora, after a profound reverence to her mother and the priest, retired, as usual, to her apartment. Donna Clara turned to the confessor with a look that demanded to be answered. "It is her hour for siesta," said the priest, helping himself to a bunch of grapes. "No, Father, no!" said Donna Clara sadly; "her maid informs me she does not retire to sleep. She was, alas! too well accustomed to that burning climate where she was lost in her infancy, to feel the heat as a Christian should. No, she retires neither to pray or sleep, after the devout custom of Spanish women, but, I fear, to"—— "To do what?" said the priest, with horror in his voice—"To think, I fear," said Donna Clara; "for often I observe, on her return, the traces of tears on her face. I tremble, Father, lest those tears be shed for that heathen land, that region of Satan, where her youth was past."—"I'll give her a pe-

nance," said Father Jose, "that will save her the trouble of shedding tears on the score of memory at least--these grapes are delicious."--"But, Father," pursued Donna Clara, with all the weak but restless anxiety of a superstitious mind, "though you have made me easy on that subject, I still am wretched. Oh, Father, how she will talk sometimes!—like a creature self-taught, that needed neither director or confessor but her own heart."—"How!" exclaimed Father Jose, "need neither confessor or director!—she must be beside herself."—"Oh, Father," continued Donna Clara, "she will say things in her mild and unanswerable manner, that, armed with all my authority, I"—— "How—how is that?" said the priest, in a tone of severity—"does she deny any of the tenets of the holy Catholic church?"—"No! no! no!" said the terrified Donna Clara crossing herself. "How then?"—"Why, she speaks in a manner in which I never heard you, reverend Father, or any of the reve-

rend brethren, whom my devotion to the holy church has led me to hear, speak before. It is in vain I tell her that true religion consists in hearing mass—in going to confession—in performing penance—in observing the fasts and vigils—in undergoing mortification and abstinence—in believing all that the holy church teaches—and hating, detesting, abhorring, and execrating——" "Enough, daughter—enough," said Father Jose; "there can be no doubt of the orthodoxy of your creed?" —"I trust not, holy Father," said the anxious Donna Clara. "I were an infidel to doubt it," interposed the priest; "I might as well deny this fruit to be exquisite, or this glass of Malaga to be worthy the table of his Holiness the Pope, if he feasted all the Cardinals. But how, daughter, as touching the supposed or apprehended defalcations in Donna Isidora's creed?"—"Holy Father, I have already explained my own religious sentiments."—"Yes—yes—we have had

enough of them; now for your daughter's." —" She will sometimes say," said Donna Clara, bursting into tears—" she will say, but never till greatly urged, that religion ought to be a system whose spirit was universal love. Do you understand any thing of that, Father?"—" Humph—humph!"—" That it must be something that bound all who professed it to habits of benevolence, gentleness, and humility, under every difference of creed and of form."—" Humph—humph!"—" Father," said Donna Clara, a little piqued at the apparent indifference with which Father Jose listened to her communications, and resolved to rouse him by some terrific evidence of the truth of her suspicions, " Father, I have heard her dare to express a hope that the heretics in the train of the English ambassador might not be everlastingly"—— " Hush!—I must not hear such sounds, or it might be my duty to take severer notice of these lapses. However, daughter," continued Father

Jose, " thus far I will venture for your consolation. As sure as this fine peach is in my hand—another, if you please—and as sure as I shall finish this other glass of Malaga"—here a long pause attested the fulfilment of the pledge—" so sure"—and Father Jose turned the inverted glass on the table—" Madonna Isidora has—has the elements of a Christian in her, however improbable it may seem to you—I swear it to you by the habit I wear;—for the rest, a little penance—a——I shall consider of it. And now, daughter, when your son Don Fernan has finished his siesta,—as there is no reason to suspect him of retiring to *think*,—please to inform him I am ready to continue the game of chess which we commenced four months ago. I have pushed my pawn to the last square but one, and the next step gives me a queen."—" Has the game continued so long?" said Donna Clara. " Long!" repeated the priest, " Aye, and may continue much longer—we have never played

more than three hours a-day on an average."

"He then retired to sleep, and the evening was passed by the priest and Don Fernan, in profound silence at their chess—by Donna Clara, in silence equally profound, at her tapestry—and by Isidora at the casement, which the intolerable heat had compelled them to leave open, in gazing at the lustre of the moon, and inhaling the odour of the tube-rose, and watching the expanding leaves of the night-blowing cereus. The physical luxuries of her former existence seemed renewed by these objects. The intense blue of the heavens, and the burning planet that stood in sole glory in their centre, might have vied with all that lavish and refulgent opulence of light in which nature arrays an Indian night. Below, too, there were flowers and fragrance; colours, like veiled beauty, mellowed, not hid; and dews that hung on every leaf, trembling and sparkling like the tears of spirits, that wept to take leave of the flowers.

" The breeze, indeed, though redolent of the breath of the orange blossom, the jasmine, and the rose, had not the rich and balmy odour that scents the Indian air by night.

Ενθα νησον μακαρων Αυραι περιπνεουσιν.

" Except this, what was not there that might not renew the delicious dream of her former existence, and make her believe herself again the queen of that fairy isle?—One image was wanting—an image whose absence made that paradise of islands, and all the odorous and flowery luxury of a moonlight garden in Spain, alike deserts to her. In her heart alone could she hope to meet that image,—to herself alone did she dare to repeat his name, and those wild and sweet songs of his country * which he had taught her in his happier moods. And so strange was the contrast between her former and present existence,

* Ireland.

—so subdued was she by constraint and coldness,—so often had she been told that every thing she did, said, or thought, was wrong,—that she began to yield up the evidences of her senses, to avoid the perpetual persecutions of teazing and imperious mediocrity, and considered the appearance of the stranger as one of those visions that formed the trouble and joy of her dreamy and illusive existence.

"I am surprised, sister," said Fernan, whom Father Jose's gaining his queen had put in unusually bad humour—"I am surprised that you never busy yourself, as young maidens use, at your needle, or in some quaint niceties of your sex."—"Or in reading some devout book," said Donna Clara, raising her eyes one moment from her tapestry, and then dropping them again; "there is the legend of that * Polish

* I have read the legend of this Polish saint, which is circulated in Dublin, and find recorded among the indisputable proofs of his vocation, that he infallibly

saint, born, like *her*, in a land of darkness, yet chosen to be a vessel——I have forgot his name, reverend Father."—"Check to the king," said Father Jose in reply. "You regard nothing but watching a few flowers, or hanging over your lute, or gazing at the moon," continued Fernan, vexed alike at the success of his antagonist and the silence of Isidora. "She is eminent in alms-deeds and works of charity," said the good-natured priest. "I was summoned to a miserable hovel near your villa, Madonna Clara, to a dying sinner, a beggar rotting on rotten straw!"—"Jesu!" cried Donna Clara with involuntary horror, "I washed the feet of thirteen beggars, on my knees in my father's hall, the week before my marriage with her honoured father, and I never could abide the sight of a beggar since."—"Associations are sometimes indelibly strong," said the

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swooned if an indecent expression was uttered in his presence—*when in his nurse's arms!*

priest drily;—then he added, "I went as was my duty, but your daughter was there before me. She had gone uncalled, and was uttering the sweetest words of consolation from a homily, which a certain poor priest, who shall be nameless, had lent her from his humble store."

"Isidora blushed at this anonymous vanity, while she mildly smiled or wept at the harassings of Don Fernan, and the heartless austerity of her mother. "I heard her as I entered the hovel; and, by the habit I wear, I paused on the threshold with delight. Her first words were—— Check-mate!" he exclaimed, forgetting his homily in his triumph, and pointing, with appealing eye, and emphatic finger, to the desperate state of his adversary's king. "That was a very extraordinary exclamation!" said the literal Donna Clara, who had never raised her eyes from her work.—"I did not think my daughter was so fond of chess as to burst into the house of a dying beggar with such a phrase in

her mouth."—"It was I said it, Madonna," said the priest, reverting to his game, on which he hung with soul and eye intent on his recent victory. "Holy saints!" said Donna Clara, still more and more perplexed, "I thought the usual phrase on such occasions was *pax vobiscum*, or"—— Before Father Jose could reply, a shriek from Isidora pierced the ears of every one. All gathered round her in a moment, reinforced by four female attendants and two pages, whom the unusual sound had summoned from the antichamber. Isidora had not fainted; she still stood among them pale as death, speechless, her eye wandering round the groupe that encircled her, without seeming to distinguish them. But she retained that presence of mind which never deserts woman where a secret is to be guarded, and she neither pointed with finger, or glanced with eye, towards the casement, where the cause of her alarm had presented itself. Pressed with a thousand questions, she appeared incapable of an-

swering them, and, declining assistance, leaned against the casement for support.

"Donna Clara was now advancing with measured step to proffer a bottle of curious essences, which she drew from a pocket of a depth beyond calculation, when one of the female attendants, aware of her favourite habits, proposed reviving her by the scent of the flowers that clustered round the frame of the casement; and collecting a handful of roses, offered them to Isidora. The sight and scent of these beautiful flowers, revived the former associations of Isidora; and, waving away her attendant, she exclaimed, "There are no roses like those which surrounded me when he beheld me first!"—"He!—who, daughter?" said the alarmed Donna Clara. "Speak, I charge you, sister," said the irritable Fernan, "to whom do you allude?"—"She raves," said the priest, whose habitual penetration discovered there was a secret,—and whose professional jealousy decided that no one, not mother or brother, should

share it with him; "she raves—ye are to blame—forbear to hang round and to question her. Madonna, retire to rest, and the saints watch round your bed!" Isidora, bending thankfully for this permission, retired to her apartment; and father Jose for an hour appeared to contend with the suspicious fears of Donna Clara, and the sullen irritability of Fernan, merely that he might induce them, in the heat of controversy, to betray all they knew or dreaded, that he might strengthen his own conjectures, and establish his own power by the discovery.

"Scire volunt secreta domus, et inde timeri."

And this desire is not only natural but necessary, in a being from whose heart his profession has torn every tie of nature and of passion; and if it generates malignity, ambition, and the wish for mischief, it is the system, not the individual, we must blame.

"Madonna," said the Father, "you are always urging your zeal for the Catholic church—and you, Senhor, are always reminding me of the honour of your family—I am anxious for both—and how can the interests of both be better secured than by Donna Isidora taking the veil?"—"The wish of my soul!" cried Donna Clara, clasping her hands, and closing her eyes, as if she witnessed her daughter's apotheosis. "I will never hear of it, Father," said Fernan; "my sister's beauty and wealth entitle *me* to claim alliance with the first families in Spain—their baboon shapes and copper-coloured visages might be redeemed for a century by such a graft on the stock, and the blood of which they boast would not be impoverished by a transfusion of the *aurum potabile* of ours into it."—"You forget, son," said the priest, "the extraordinary circumstances attendant on the early part of your sister's life. There are many of our Catholic nobility who would rather see the black blood

of the banished Moors, or the proscribed Jews, flow in the veins of their descendants, than that of one who"—— Here a mysterious whisper drew from Donna Clara a shudder of distress and consternation, and from her son an impatient motion of angry incredulity. "I do not credit a word of it," said the latter; "you wish that my sister should take the veil, and therefore you credit and circulate the monstrous invention."—"Take heed, son, I conjure you," said the trembling Donna Clara. "Take you heed, Madam, that you do not sacrifice your daughter to an unfounded and incredible fiction."—"Fiction!" repeated Father Jose—"Senhor, I forgive your illiberal reflections on me,—but let me remind you, that the same immunity will not be extended to the insult you offer to the Catholic faith."—"Reverend Father," said the terrified Fernan, "the Catholic church has not a more devoted and unworthy professor on earth than myself."—"I do believe the latter,"

said the priest. "You admit all that the holy church teaches to be irrefragably true?"—"To be sure I do."—"Then you must admit that the islands in the Indian seas are particularly under the influence of the devil?"—"I do, if the church requires me so to believe."—"And that he possessed a peculiar sway over that island where your sister was lost in her infancy?"—"I do not see how that follows," said Fernan, making a sudden stand at this premise of the Sorites. "Not see how that follows!" repeated Father Jose, crossing himself;

"Excæcavit oculos eorum ne viderent."

But why waste I my Latin and logic on thee, who art incapable of both? Mark me, I will use but one unanswerable argument, the which whoso gainsayeth is a—gainsayer—that's all. The Inquisition at Goa knows the truth of what I have asserted, and who will dare deny it now?"

—" Not I!—not I!" exclaimed Donna Clara; " nor, I am sure, will this stubborn boy. Son, I adjure you, make haste to believe what the reverend Father has told you."—" I am believing as fast as I can," answered Don Fernan, in the tone of one who is reluctantly swallowing a distasteful mess; " but my faith will be choaked if you don't allow it time to swallow. As for digestion," he muttered, " let that come when it pleases God."—" Daughter," said the priest, who well knew the *mollia tempora fandi*, and saw that the sullen and angry Fernan could not well bear more at present; " daughter, it is enough—we must lead with gentleness those whose steps find stumbling-blocks in the paths of grace. Pray with me, daughter, that your son's eyes may yet be opened to the glory and felicity of his sister's vocation to a state where the exhaustless copiousness of divine benignity places the happy inmates above all those mean and mundane anxieties, those petty and local wants, which——

Ah!—hem—verily I feel some of those wants myself at this moment. I am hoarse with speaking; and the intense heat of this night hath so exhausted my strength, that methinks the wing of a partridge would be no unseasonable refreshment."

"At a sign from Donna Clara, a salver with wine appeared, and a partridge that might have provoked the French prelate to renew his meal once more, spite of his horror of *toujours perdrix*. "See, daughter, see how much I am exhausted in this distressing controversy—well may I say, the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."—"Then you and the zeal of the house will soon be *quit*," muttered Fernan as he retired. And drawing the folds of his mantle over his shoulder, he threw a glance of wonder at the happy facility with which the priest discussed the wings and breast of his favourite bird,—whispering alternately words of admonition to Donna Clara, and muttering something about the omission of pimento and lemon.

"Father," said Don Fernan, stalking

back from the door, and fronting the priest —"Father, I have a favour to ask of you."—"Glad, were it in my power to comply with it," said Father Jose, turning over the skeleton of the fowl; "but you see here is only the thigh, and that somewhat bare."—"It is not of that I speak or think, reverend Father," said Fernan, with a smile; "I have but to request, that you will not renew the subject of my sister's vocation till the return of my father."—"Certainly not, son, certainly not. Ah! you know the time to ask a favour—you know I never could refuse you at a moment like this, when my heart is warmed, and softened, and expanded, by—by—by the evidences of your contrition and humiliation, and all that your devout mother, and your zealous spiritual friend, could hope or wish for. In truth, it overcomes me—these tears—I do not often weep but on occasions like these, and then I weep abundantly, and am compelled to recruit my lack of moisture thus."—"Fetch more

wine," said Donna Clara.—The order was obeyed.—" Good night, Father," said Don Fernan.—" The saints watch round you, my son! Oh I am exhausted!—I sink in this struggle! The night is hot, and requires wine to slake my thirst—and wine is a provocative, and requires food to take away its deleterious and damnable qualities—and food, especially partridge, which is a hot and stimulative nutritive, requires drink again to absorb or neutralize its exciting qualities. Observe me, Donna Clara—I speak as to the learned. There is stimulation, and there is absorption; the causes of which are manifold, and the effects such as——I am not bound to tell you at present."—" Reverend Father," said the admiring Donna Clara, not guessing, in the least, from what source all this eloquence flowed, " I trespassed on your time merely to ask a favour also."—" Ask and 'tis granted," said Father Jose, with a protrusion of his foot as proud as that of Sixtus himself. " It is merely to know,

will not all the inhabitants of those accursed Indian isles be damned everlastingly?" —" Damned everlastingly, and without doubt," returned the priest. " Now my mind is easy," rejoined the lady, " and I shall sleep in peace to-night."

" Sleep, however, did not visit her so soon as she expected, for an hour after she knocked at Father Jose's door, repeating, " Damned to all eternity, Father, did you not say?"—" Be damned to all eternity!" said the priest, tossing on his feverish bed, and dreaming, in the intervals of his troubled sleep, of Don Fernan coming to confession with a drawn sword, and Donna Clara with a bottle of Xeres in her hand, which she swallowed at a draught, while his parched lips were gaping for a drop in vain,—and of the Inquisition being established in an island off the coast of Bengal, and a huge partridge seated with a cap on at the end of a table covered with black, as chief Inquisitor,—and various and

monstrous chimeras, the abortive births of repletion and indigestion.

"Donna Clara, catching only the last words, returned to her apartment with light step and gladdened heart, and, full of pious consolation, renewed her devotions before the image of the virgin in her apartment, at each side of whose niche two wax tapers were burning, till the cool morning breeze made it possible for her to retire with some hope of rest.

"Isidora, in her apartment, was equally sleepless; and she, too, had prostrated herself before the sacred image, but with different thoughts. Her feverish and dreamy existence, composed of wild and irreconcileable contrasts between the forms of the present, and the visions of the past,—the difference between all that she felt within, and all that she saw around her,—between the impassioned life of recollection, and the monotonous one of reality,—was becoming too much for a heart bursting with

undirected sensibilities, and a head giddy from vicissitudes that would have deeply tried much firmer faculties.

" She remained for some time repeating the usual number of ave's, to which she added the litany of the Virgin, without any corresponding impulses of solace or illumination, till at length, feeling that her prayers were not the expressions of her heart, and dreading this heterodoxy of the heart more than the violation of the ritual, she ventured to address the image of the Virgin in language of her own.

" Mild and beautiful Spirit!" she cried, prostrating herself before the figure— " you whose lips alone have smiled on me since I reached your Christian land, —you whose countenance I have sometimes imagined to belong to those who dwelt in the stars of my own Indian sky, —hear me, and be not angry with me! Let me lose all feeling of my present existence, or all memory of the past! Why do my former thoughts return? They

once made me happy, now they are thorns in my heart! Why do they retain their power since their nature is altered? I cannot be what I was—Oh, let me then no longer remember it! Let me, if possible, see, feel, and think as those around me do! Alas! I feel it is much easier to descend to their level than to raise them to mine. Time, constraint, and dullness, may do much for me, but what time could ever operate such a change on them! It would be like looking for the pearls at the bottom of the stagnant ponds which art has dug in their gardens. No, mother of the Deity! divine and mysterious woman, no!—they never shall see another throb of my burning heart. Let it consume in its own fires before a drop of their cold compassion extinguishes them! Mother divine! are not burning hearts, then, worthiest of thee?—and does not the love of nature assimilate itself to the love of God! True, we may love without religion, but can we be religious without love? Yet, mother

divine! dry up my heart, since there is no longer a channel for its streams to flow through!—or turn all those streams into the river, narrow and cold, that holds its course on to eternity! Why should I think or feel, since life requires only duties that no feeling suggests, and apathy that no reflection disturbs? Here let me rest!—it is indeed the end of enjoyment, but it is also the end of suffering; and a thousand tears are a price too dear for the single smile which is sold for them in the commerce of life. Alas! it is better to wander in perpetual sterility than to be tortured with the remembrance of flowers that have withered, and odours that have died for ever." Then a gush of uncontroulable emotion overwhelming her, she again bowed before the Virgin. "Yes, help me to banish every image from my soul but his—his alone! Let my heart be like this lonely apartment, consecrated by the presence of one sole image, and illuminated only by that light which affection

kindles before the object of its adoration, and worships it by for ever!"

"In an agony of enthusiasm she continued to kneel before the image; and when she rose, the silence of her apartment, and the calm smile of the celestial figure, seemed at once a contrast and a reproach to this excess of morbid indulgence. That smile appeared to her like a frown. It is certain, that in agitation we can feel no solace from features that express only profound tranquillity. We would rather wish corresponding agitation, even hostility—any thing but a calm that neutralizes and absorbs us. It is the answer of the rock to the wave—we collect, foam, dash, and disperse ourselves against it, and retire broken, shattered, and murmuring to the echoes of our disappointment.

"From the tranquil and hopeless aspect of the divinity, smiling on the misery it neither consoles or relieves, and intimating in that smile the profound and pulseless apathy of inaccessible elevation, coldly

hinting that humanity must cease to be, before it can cease to suffer—from this the sufferer rushed for consolation to nature, whose ceaseless agitation seems to correspond with the vicissitudes of human destiny and the emotions of the human heart—whose alternation of storms and calms,—of clouds and sun-light,—of terrors and delights—seems to keep a kind of mysterious measure of ineffable harmony with that instrument whose chords are doomed alternately to the thrill of agony and rapture, till the hand of death sweeps over all the strings, and silences them for ever.—With such a feeling, Isidora leaned against her casement, gasped for a breath of air, which the burning night did not grant, and thought how, on such a night in her Indian isle, she could plunge into the stream shaded by her beloved tamarind, or even venture amid the still and silvery waves of the ocean, laughing at the broken beams of the moonlight, as her light form dimpled the waters—snatching with smiling de-

light the brilliant, tortuous, and enamelled shells that seemed to woo her white footsteps as she turned to the shore. Now all was different. The duties of the bath had been performed, but with a parade of soaps, perfumes, and, above all, attendants, who, though of her own sex, gave Isidora an unspeakable degree of disgust at the operation. The sponges and odours sickened her unsophisticated senses, and the presence of another human being seemed to close up every pore.

"She had felt no refreshment from the bath, or from her prayers—she sought it at her casement, but there also in vain. The moon was as bright as the sun of colder climates, and the heavens were all in a blaze with her light. She seemed like a gallant vessel ploughing the bright and trackless ocean alone, while a thousand stars burned in the wake of her quiet glory, like attendant vessels pursuing their course to undiscovered worlds, and pointing them out to the mortal eye that lin-

gered on their course, and loved their light.

" Such was the scene above, but what a contrast to the scene below! The glorious and unbounded light fell on an inclosure of stiff parterres, cropped myrtles and orange-trees in tubs, and quadrangular ponds, and bowers of trellis-work, and nature tortured a thousand ways, and indignant and repulsive under her tortures every way.

" Isidora looked and wept. Tears had now become her language when alone—it was a language she dared not utter before her family. Suddenly she saw one of the moonlight alleys darkened by an approaching figure. It advanced—it uttered her name—the name she remembered and loved—the name of Immalee! " Ah!" she exclaimed, leaning from the casement, " is there then one who recognizes me by that name?"—" It is only by that name I can address you," answered the voice of the stranger—" I have not yet the honour of

being acquainted with the name your Christian friends have given you."—"They call me Isidora, but do you still call me Immalee. But how is it," she added in a trembling voice,—her fears for his safety overcoming all her sudden and innocent joy at his sight—" how is it that you are here?—here, where no human being is ever beheld but the inmates of the mansion?—how did you cross the garden wall?—how did you come from India? Oh! retire for your own safety! I am among those whom I cannot trust or love. My mother is severe—my brother is violent. Oh! how did you obtain entrance into the garden?—How is it," she added in a broken voice, " that you risk so much to see one whom you have forgotten so long?"—" Fair Neophyte, beautiful Christian," answered the stranger, with a diabolical sneer, " be it known to you that I regard bolts, and bars, and walls, as much as I did the breakers and rocks of your Indian isle—that I can go

where, and retire when I please, without leave asked or taken of your brother's mastiffs, or Toledos, or spring-guns, and in utter defiance of your mother's advanced guard of duennas, armed in spectacles, and flanked with a double ammunition of rosaries, with beads as large as——"
"Hush!—hush!—do not utter such impious sounds—I am taught to revere those holy things. But is it you?—and did I indeed see you last night, or was it a thought such as visits me in dreams, and wraps me again in visions of that beautiful and blessed isle where first I——Oh that I never had seen you!"—"Lovely Christian! be reconciled to your horrible destiny. You saw me last night—I crossed your path twice when you were sparkling among the brightest and most beautiful of all Madrid. It was me you saw—I rivetted your eye—I transfixed your slender frame as with a flash of lightning—you fell fainting and withered under my burning glance. It was me you saw—

me, the disturber of your angelical existence in that isle of paradise—the hunter of your form and your steps, even amid the complicated and artificial tracks in which you have been concealed by the false forms of the existence you have embraced!"—"Embraced!—Oh no! they seized on me—they dragged me here—they made me a Christian. They told me all was for my salvation, for my happiness here and hereafter—and I trust it will, for I have been so miserable ever since, that I ought to be happy somewhere."—"Happy," repeated the stranger with his withering sneer—"and are you not happy now? The delicacy of your exquisite frame is no longer exposed to the rage of the elements—the fine and feminine luxury of your taste is solicited and indulged by a thousand inventions of art—your bed is of down—your chamber hung with tapestry. Whether the moon be bright or dark, six wax tapers burn in your chamber all night. Whether the skies be bright or cloudy,—

whether the earth be clothed with flowers, or deformed with tempests,—the art of the limner has surrounded you with "a new heaven and a new earth;" and you may bask in suns that never set, while the heavens are dark to other eyes,—and luxuriate amid landscapes and flowers, while half your fellow-creatures are perishing amid snows and tempests!" (Such was the overflowing acrimony of this being, that he could not speak of the beneficence of nature, or the luxuries of art, without interweaving something that seemed like a satire on, or a scorn of both.) "You also have intellectual beings to converse with instead of the chirpings of loxias, and the chatterings of monkeys."—"I have not found the conversation I encounter much more intelligible or significant," murmured Isidora, but the stranger did not appear to hear her. "You are surrounded by every thing that can flatter the senses, intoxicate the imagination, or expand the heart. All these indulgences must make you forget

the voluptuous but unrefined liberty of your former existence."—" The birds in my mother's cages," said Isidora, " are for ever pecking at their gilded bars, and trampling on the clear seeds and limpid water they are supplied with—would they not rather rest in the mossy trunk of a doddered oak, and drink of whatever stream they met, and be at liberty, at all the risk of poorer food and fouler drink —would they not rather do any thing than break their bills against gilded wires?" —" Then you do not feel your new existence in this Christian land so likely to surfeit you with delight as you once thought? For shame, Immalee—shame on your ingratitude and caprice! Do you remember when from your Indian isle you caught a glimpse of the Christian worship, and were entranced at the sight?"—" I remember all that ever passed in that isle. My life formerly was all anticipation,—now it is all retrospection. *The life of the happy is all hopes,—that of the un-*

fortunate all memory. Yes, I remember catching a glimpse of that religion so beautiful and pure; and when they brought me to a Christian land, I thought I should have found them all Christians."—" And what did you find them, then, Immalee?" —" Only Catholics."—" Are you aware of the danger of the words you utter? Do you know that in this country to hint a doubt of Catholicism and Christianity being the same, would consign you to the flames as a heretic incorrigible? Your mother, so lately known to you as a mother, would bind your hands when the covered litter came for its victim; and your father, though he has never yet beheld you, would buy with his last ducat the faggots that were to consume you to ashes; and all your relations in their gala robes would shout their hallelujahs to your dying screams of torture. Do you know that the Christianity of these countries is diametrically opposite to the Christianity of that world of which you caught

a gleam, and which you may see recorded in the pages of your Bible, if you are permitted to read it?"

" Isidora wept, and confessed she had not found Christianity what she had at first believed it; but with her wild and eccentric ingenuousness, she accused herself the next moment of her confession, —and she added, " I am so ignorant in this new world,—I have so much to learn, —my senses so often deceive me,—and my habits and perceptions so different from what they ought to be—I mean from what those around me are—that I should not speak or think but as I am taught. Perhaps, after some years of instruction and suffering, I may be able to discover that happiness cannot exist in this new world, and Christianity is not so remote from Catholicism as it appears to me now." —" And have you not found yourself happy in this new world of intelligence and luxury?" said Melmoth, in a tone of involuntary softness. " I have at times."

—" What times?"—" When the weary day was over, and my dreams bore me back to that island of enchantment. Sleep is to me like some bark rowed by visionary pilots, that wafts me to shores of beauty and blessedness,—and all night long I revel in my dreams with spirits. Again I live among flowers and odours—a thousand voices sing to me from the brooks and the breezes—the air is all alive and eloquent with invisible melodists—I walk amid a breathing atmosphere, and living and loving inanimation—blossoms that shed themselves beneath my steps—and streams that tremble to kiss my feet, and then retire; and then return again, wasting themselves in fondness before me, and touching me, as my lips press the holy images they have taught me to worship here!"—" Does no other image ever visit your dreams, Immalee?"—" I need not tell you," said Isidora, with that singular mixture of natural firmness, and partial obscuration of intellect,—the combined re-

sult of her original and native character, and extraordinary circumstances of her early existence—"I need not tell you—you know you are with me every night!"—"Me?"—"Yes, you; you are for ever in that canoe that bears me to the Indian isle—you gaze on me, but your expression is so changed, that I dare not speak to you—we fly over the seas in a moment, but you are for ever at the helm, though you never land—the moment the paradise isle appears, you disappear; and as we return, the ocean is all dark, and our course is as dark and swift as the storm that sweeps them—you look at me, but never speak—Oh yes! you are with me every night!"—"But, Immalee, these are all dreams—idle dreams. *I* row you over the Indian seas from Spain!—this is all a vision of your imagination."—"Is it a dream that I see you now?" said Isidora—"is it a dream that I talk with you?—Tell me, for my senses are bewildered; and it appears to me no less strange, that you should

be here in Spain, than that I should be in my native island. Alas! in the life that I now lead, dreams have become realities, and realities seem only like dreams. How is it you are here, if indeed you are here? —how is it that you have wandered so far to see me? How many oceans you must have crossed, how many isles you must have seen, and none like that where I first beheld you! But is it you indeed I behold? I thought I saw you last night, but I had rather trust even my dreams than my senses. I believed you only a visitor of that isle of visions, and a haunter of the visions that recall it—but are you in truth a living being, and one whom I may hope to behold in this land of cold realities and Christian horrors?"—"Beautiful Immalee, or Isidora, or whatever other name your Indian worshippers, or Christian god-fathers and god-mothers, have called you by, I pray you listen to me, while I expound a few mysteries to you." And Melmoth, as he spoke, flung himself

on a bed of hyacinths and tulips that displayed their glowing flowers, and sent up their odorous breath right under Isidora's casement. "Oh you will destroy my flowers!" cried she, while a reminiscence of her former picturesque existence, when flowers were the companions alike of her imagination and her pure heart, awoke her exclamation. "It is my vocation—I pray you pardon me!" said Melmoth, as he basked on the crushed flowers, and darted his withering sneer and scowling glance at Isidora. "I am commissioned to trample on and bruise every flower in the natural and moral world ——hyacinths, hearts, and bagatelles of that kind, just as they occur. And now, Donna Isidora, with as long an *et cetera* as you or your sponsors could wish, and with no possible offence to the herald, here I am to-night—and where I shall be to-morrow night, depends on your choice. I would as soon be on the Indian seas, where your dreams send me rowing every night, or crashing through the ice near

the Poles, or ploughing with my naked corse, (if corses have feeling), through the billows of that ocean where I must one day (a day that has neither sun or moon, neither commencement or termination), plough forever, and reap despair!"—"Hush!—hush!—Oh forbear such horrid sounds! Are you indeed he whom I saw in the isle? Are you he, inwoven ever since that moment with my prayers, my hopes, my heart? Are you that being upon whom hope subsisted, when life itself was failing? On my passsage to this Christian land, I suffered much. I was so ill you would have pitied me—the clothes they put on me—the language they made me speak—the religion they made me believe—the country they brought me to—Oh *you!*—you alone!—the thought—the image of you, could alone have supported me! I loved, and to love is to live. Amid the disruption of every natural tie,—amid the loss of that delicious existence which seems a dream, and which still fills my dreams,

and makes sleep a second existence,—I have thought of you—have dreamt of you—have loved you!"—"Loved me?—no being yet loved me but pledged me in tears."—"And have I not wept?" said Isidora—"believe these tears—they are not the first I have shed, nor I fear will be the last, since I owe the first to you." And she wept as she spoke. "Well," said the wanderer, with a bitter and self-satirizing laugh, "I shall be persuaded at last that I am "a marvellous proper man." Well, if it must be so, happy man be his dole! And when shall the auspicious day, beautiful Immalee, *still* beautiful Isidora, in spite of your Christian name, (to which I have a most anti-catholic objection)—when shall that bright day dawn on your long slumbering eye-lashes, and waken them with kisses, and beams, and light, and love, and all the paraphernalia with which folly arrays misery previous to their union—that glittering and empoisoned drapery that well resembles what of old Dejanira sent to her husband

—when shall the day of bliss be?" And he laughed with that horrible convulsion that mingles the expression of levity with that of despair, and leaves the listener no doubt whether there is more despair in laughter, or more laughter in despair. "I understand you not," said the pure and timid Isidora; "and if you would not terrify me to madness, laugh no more—no more, at least, in that fearful way!"—"*I cannot weep*," said Melmoth, fixing on her his dry and burning eyes, strikingly visible in the moonlight; "the fountain of tears has been long dried up within me, like that of every other human blessing." —"I can weep for both," said Isidora, "if that be all." And her tears flowed fast, as much from memory as from grief—and when those sources are united, God and the sufferer only know how fast and bitterly they fall. "Reserve them for our nuptial hour, my lovely bride," said Melmoth to himself; "you will have occasion for them then."

"There was a custom then, however indelicate and repulsive it may sound to modern ears, for ladies who were doubtful of the intentions of their lovers to demand of them the proof of their purity and honour, by requiring an appeal to their family, and a solemn union under the sanction of the church. Perhaps there was more genuine spirit of truth and chastity in this, than in all the ambiguous flirtation that is carried on with an ill-understood and mysterious dependence on principles that have never been defined, and fidelity that has never been removed. When the lady in the Italian tragedy * asks her lover, almost at their first interview, if his intentions are honourable, and requires, as the proof of their being so, that he shall espouse her immediately, does she not utter a language more unsophisticated, more intelligible, more *heartedly* pure, than all the romantic and in-

* Alluding possibly to "Romeo and Juliet."

credible reliance that other females are supposed to place in the volatility of impulse,—in that wild and extemporaneous feeling,—that "house on the sands,"—which never has its foundation in the immoveable depths of the heart. Yielding to this feeling, Isidora, in a voice that faultered at its own accents, murmured, "If you love me, seek me no more clandestinely. My mother is good, though she is austere—my brother is kind, though he is passionate—my father—I have never seen him! I know not what to say, but if he be *my* father, he will love you. Meet me in their presence, and I will no longer feel pain and shame mingled with the delight of seeing you. Invoke the sanction of the church, and then, perhaps,"——"Perhaps!" retorted Melmoth; "You have learned the European 'perhaps!'—the art of suspending the meaning of an emphatic word—of affecting to draw the curtain of the heart at the moment you drop its folds closer and closer—of bidding

us despair at the moment you intend we should feel hope!"—"Oh no!—no!" answered the innocent being; "I am *truth*. I am Immalee when I speak to you,—though to all others in this country, which they call Christian, I am Isidora. When I loved you first, I had only one heart to consult,—now there are many, and some who have not hearts like mine. But if you love me, you can bend to them as I have done—you can love their God, their home, their hopes, and their country. Even with *you* I could not be happy, unless you adored the cross to which your hand first pointed my wandering sight, and the religion which you reluctantly confessed was the most beautiful and beneficent on earth."—"Did I confess that?" echoed Melmoth; "It must have been *reluctantly* indeed. Beautiful Immalee! I am a convert to you;" and he stifled a Satanic laugh as he spoke; "to your new religion, and your beauty, and your Spanish birth and nomenclature, and every

thing that you would wish. I will incontinently wait on your pious mother, and angry brother, and all your relatives, testy, proud, and ridiculous as they may be. I will encounter the starched ruffs, and rustling manteaus, and whale-boned fardingales of the females, from your good mother down to the oldest duenna who sits spectacled, and armed with bobbin, on her inaccessible and untempted sopha; and the twirled whiskers, plumed hats, and shouldered capas of all your male relatives. And I will drink chocolate, and strut among them; and when they refer me to your mustachoed man of law, with his thread-bare cloke of black velvet over his shoulder, his long quill in his hand, and his soul in three sheets of wide-spread parchment, I will dower you in the most ample territory ever settled on a bride."—"Oh let it be, then, in that land of music and sunshine where we first met! One spot where I might set my foot amid its flowers, is worth all the cultivated earth

of Europe!" said Isidora.—"No!—it shall be in a territory with which your bearded men of law are far better acquainted, and which even your pious mother and proud family must acknowledge my claim to, when they shall hear it asserted and explained. Perchance they may be joint-tenants with *me* there; and yet (strange to say!) they will never litigate my exclusive title to possession."—"I understand nothing of this," said Isidora; "but I feel I am transgressing the decorums of a Spanish female and a Christian, in holding this conference with you any longer. If you think as you once thought,—if you feel as *I* must feel for ever,—there needs not this discussion, which only perplexes and terrifies. What have I to do with this territory of which you speak? That *you* are its possessor, is its only value in my eyes!"—"What have you to do with it?" repeated Melmoth; "Oh, you know not how much you may have to do with it and me yet! In other

cases, the possession of the territory is the security for the man,—but here the man is the security for the everlasting possession of the territory. Mine heirs must inherit it for ever and ever, if they hold by my tenure. Listen to me, beautiful Immalee, or Christian, or whatever other name you choose to be called by! Nature, your first sponsor, baptized you with the dews of Indian roses—your Christian sponsors, of course, spared not water, salt, or oil, to wash away the stain of nature from your regenerated frame—and your last sponsor, if you will submit to the rite, will anoint you with a new chrism. But of that hereafter. Listen to me while I announce to you the wealth, the population, the magnificence of that region to which I will endower you. The rulers of the earth are there—all of them. There be the heroes, and the sovereigns, and the tyrants. There are their riches, and pomp, and power—Oh what a glorious accumulation!—and they have thrones, and

crowns, and pedestals, and trophies of fire, that burn for ever and ever, and the light of their glory blazes eternally. There are all you read of in story, your Alexanders and Cæsars, your Ptolemies and Pharaohs. There be the princes of the East, the Nimrods, the Belshazzars, and the Holoferneses of their day. There are the princes of the North, the Odins, the Attilas, (named by your church the scourge of God), the Alarics, and all those nameless and name-undeserving barbarians, who, under various titles and claims, ravaged and ruined the earth they came to conquer. There be the sovereigns of the South, and East, and West, the Mahommedans, the Caliphs, the Saracens, the Moors, with all their gorgeous pretensions and ornaments—the crescent, the Koran, and the horse-tail—the trump, the gong, and the atabal, (or to suit it to your Christianised ear, lovely Neophyte!) 'the noise of the captains, and the shoutings.' There be also those triple-crowned

chieftains of the West, who hide their shorn heads under a diadem, and for every hair they shave, demand the life of a sovereign—who, pretending to humility, trample on power—whose title is, Servant of servants—and whose claim and recognizance is, Lord of lords. Oh! you will not lack company in that bright region, for bright it will be!—and what matter whether its light be borrowed from the gleam of sulphur, or the trembling light of the moon, by which I see you look so pale?"—"I look pale!" said Isidora gasping; "I *feel* pale! I know not the meaning of your words, but I know it must be horrible. Speak no more of that region, with its pride, its wickedness, and its splendour! I am willing to follow you to deserts, to solitudes, which human step never trod but yours, and where mine shall trace, with sole fidelity, the print of yours. Amid loneliness I was born; amid loneliness I could die. Let me but, wherever I live, and whenever I die, be yours!—

and for the place, it matters not, let it be even"—— and she shivered involuntarily as she spoke; "Let it be even"—— "Even—*where?*" asked Melmoth, while a wild feeling of triumph in the devotedness of this unfortunate female, and of horror at the destination which she was unconsciously imprecating on herself, mingled in the question. "Even where you are to be," answered the devoted Isidora, "let me be there! and there I must be happy, as in the isle of flowers and sunlight, where I first beheld you. Oh! there are no flowers so balmy and roseate as those that once blew there! There are no waters so musical, or breezes so fragrant, as those that I listened to and inhaled, when I thought that they repeated to me the echo of your steps, or the melody of your voice—that *human music* the first I ever heard, and which, when I cease to hear'—— "You will hear much better!" interrupted Melmoth; "the voices of ten thousand—ten millions of spirits—

beings whose tones are immortal, without cessation, without pause, without interval!"—"Oh that will be glorious!" said Isidora, clasping her hands; "the only language I have learned in this new world worth speaking, is the language of music. I caught some imperfect sounds from birds in my first world, but in my second world they taught me music; and the misery they have taught me, hardly makes a balance against that new and delicious language."—"But think," rejoined Melmoth, "if your taste for music be indeed so exquisite, how it will be indulged, how it will be enlarged, in hearing those voices accompanied and re-echoed by the thunders of ten thousand billows of fire, lashing against rocks which eternal despair has turned into adamant! They talk of the music of the spheres!—Dream of the music of those living orbs turning on their axis of fire for ever and ever, and ever singing as they shine, like your brethren the Christians, who had the honour to il-

luminate Nero's garden in Rome on a rejoicing night."—"You make me tremble!"—"Tremble!—a strange effect of fire. Fie! what a coyness is this! I have promised, on your arrival at your new territory, all that is mighty and magnificent,—all that is splendid and voluptuous—the sovereign and the sensualist—the inebriated monarch and the pampered slave—the bed of roses and the canopy of fire!"—"And is this the home to which you invite me?"—"It is—it is. Come, and be mine!—myriads of voices summon you—hear and obey them! Their voices thunder in the echoes of mine—their fires flash from my eyes, and blaze in my heart. Hear me, Isidora, my beloved, hear me! I woo you in earnest, and for ever! Oh how trivial are the ties by which mortal lovers are bound, compared to those in which you and I shall be bound to eternity! Fear not the want of a numerous and splendid society. I have enumerated sovereigns, and pontiffs, and heroes,—and

if you should condescend to remember the trivial amusements of your present sejour, you will have enough to revive its associations. You love music, and doubtless you will have most of the musicians who have chromatized since the first essays of Tubal Cain to Lully, who beat himself to death at one of his own oratorios, or operas, I don't know which. They will have a singular accompaniment—the eternal roar of a sea of fire makes a profound bass to the chorus of millions of singers in torture!"—"What is the meaning of this horrible description?" said the trembling Isidora; "your words are riddles to me. Do you jest with me for the sake of tormenting, or of laughing at me?"—"Laughing!" repeated her wild visitor; "that is an exquisite hint—*vive la bagatelle!* Let us laugh for ever!—we shall have enough to keep us in countenance. There will be all that ever have dared to laugh on earth—the singers, the dancers, the gay, the voluptuous, the brilliant, the beloved—all who have ever dared to mistake their des-

tiny, so far as to imagine that enjoyment was not a crime, or that a smile was not an infringement of their duty as sufferers. All such must expiate their error under circumstances which will probably compel the most inveterate disciple of Democritus, the most *inextinguishable laugher* among them, to allow that *there*, at least, 'laughter is madness.'"—"I do not understand you," said Isidora, listening to him with that sinking of the heart which is produced by a combined and painful feeling of ignorance and terror. "Not understand me?" repeated Melmoth, with that sarcastic frigidity of countenance which frightfully contrasted the burning intelligence of his eyes, that seemed like the fires of a volcano bursting out amid masses of snow heaped up to its very edge; "not understand me!—are you not, then, fond of music?"—"I am."—"Of dancing, too, my graceful, beautiful love?"—"I *was*."—"What is the meaning of the different emphasis you give to those answers?"

—"I love music—I must love it for ever—it is the language of recollection. A single strain of it wafts me back to the dreamy blessedness, the enchanted existence, of my own—own isle. Of dancing I cannot say so much. I have *learnt* dancing—but I *felt* music. I shall never forget the hour when I heard it for the first time, and imagined it was the language which Christians spoke to each other. I have heard them speak a different language since."—"Doubtless their language is not always melody, particularly when they address each other on controverted points in religion. Indeed, I can conceive nothing less a-kin to harmony than the debate of a Dominican and Franciscan on the respective efficacy of the cowl of the order, to ascertain the salvation of him who happens to die in it. But have you no other reason for *being* fond of music, and for only *having been* fond of dancing? Nay, let me have 'your most exquisite reason.'"

"It seemed as if this unhappy being was impelled by his ineffable destiny to deride the misery he inflicted, in proportion to its bitterness. His sarcastic levity bore a direct and fearful proportion to his despair. Perhaps this is also the case in circumstances and characters less atrocious. A mirth which is not gaiety is often the mask which hides the convulsed and distorted features of agony —and laughter, which never yet was the expression of rapture, has often been the only intelligible language of madness and misery. Extacy only smiles,—despair laughs. It seemed, too, as if no keenness of ironical insult, no menace of portentous darkness, had power to revolt the feelings, or alarm the apprehensions, of the devoted being to whom they were addressed. Her "most exquisite reasons," demanded in a tone of ruthless irony, were given in one whose exquisite and tender melody seemed still to retain the modulation on which its first sounds had

been formed,—that of the song of birds, mingled with the murmur of waters.

" I love music, because when I hear it I think of you. I have ceased to love dancing, though I was at first intoxicated with it, because, when dancing, I have sometimes forgot you. When I listen to music, your image floats on every note,—I hear you in every sound. The most inarticulate murmurs that I produce on my guitar (for I am very ignorant) are like a spell of melody that raises a form indescribable—not you, but *my idea of you.* In your presence, though that seems necessary to my existence, I have never felt that exquisite delight that I have experienced in that of your image, when music has called it up from the recesses of my heart. Music seems to me like the voice of religion summoning to remember and worship the God of my heart. Dancing appears like a momentary apostasy, almost a profanation."—" That, indeed, is a sweet and subtle reason," answered Melmoth,

" and one that, of course, has but one failure,—that of not being sufficiently flattering to the hearer. And so my image floats on the rich and tremulous waves of melody one moment, like a god of the overflowing billows of music, triumphing in their swells, and graceful even in their falls,—and the next moment appears, like the dancing demon of your operas, grinning at you between the brilliant movement of your fandangoes, and flinging the withering foam of his black and convulsed lips into the cup where you pledge at your banquetting. Well—dancing—music—let them go together! It seems that my image is equally mischievous in both—in one you are tortured by reminiscence, and in the other by remorse. Suppose that image is withdrawn from you for ever,—suppose that it were possible to break the tie that unites us, and whose vision has entered into the soul of both."—" You may suppose it," said Isidora, with maiden pride and tender grief blended in her

voice; "and if you do, believe that I will try to suppose it too; the effort will not cost much,—nothing but—my life!"

"As Melmoth beheld this blessed and beautiful being, once so refined amid nature, and now so natural amid refinement, still possessing all the soft luxuriance of her first angelic nature, amid the artificial atmosphere where her sweets were uninhaled, and her brilliant tints doomed to wither unappreciated,—where her pure and sublime devotedness of heart was doomed to beat like a wave against a rock,—exhaust its murmurs,——and expire;—As he felt this, and gazed on her, he cursed himself; and then, with the selfishness of hopeless misery, he felt that the curse might, by dividing it, be diminished.

"Isidora!" he whispered in the softest tones he could assume, approaching the casement, at which his pale and beautiful victim stood; "Isidora! will you then be mine?"—"What shall I say?" said Isido-

ra; "if love requires the answer, I have said enough; if only vanity, I have said too much."—"Vanity! beautiful trifler, you know not what you say; the accusing angel himself might blot out that article from the catalogue of my sins. It is one of my prohibited and impossible offences; it is an earthly feeling, and therefore one which I can neither participate or enjoy. Certain it is that I feel some share of human pride at this moment."—"Pride! at what? Since I have known you, I have felt no pride but that of supreme devotedness,—that self-annihilating pride which renders the victim prouder of its wreath, than the sacrificer of his office."—"But I feel another pride," answered Melmoth, and in a proud tone he spoke it,—"a pride, which, like that of the storm that visited the ancient cities, whose destruction you may have read of, while it blasts, withers, and encrusts paintings, gems, music, and festivity, grasping them in its talons of annihilation, exclaims,

Perish to all the world, perhaps beyond the period of its existence, but live to me in darkness and in corruption! Preserve all the exquisite modulation of your forms! all the indestructible brilliancy of your colouring!—but preserve it for me alone!—me, the single, pulseless, eyeless, heartless embracer of an unfertile bride,—the brooder over the dark and unproductive nest of eternal sterility,—the mountain whose lava of internal fire has stifled, and indurated, and inclosed for ever, all that was the joy of earth, the felicity of life, and the hope of futurity!"

"As he spoke, his expression was at once so convulsed and so derisive, so indicative of malignity and levity, so thrilling to the heart, while it withered every fibre it touched and wrung, that Isidora, with all her innocent and helpless devotedness, could not avoid shuddering before this fearful being, while, in trembling and unappeaseable solicitude, she demanded, "Will you then be mine? Or what am

I to understand from your terrible words? Alas! *my* heart has never enveloped itself in mysteries—never has the light of its truth burst forth amid the thunderings and burnings in which you have issued the law of my destiny."—"Will you then be mine, Isidora?"—"Consult my parents. Wed me by the rites, and in the face of the church, of which I am an unworthy member, and I will be yours for ever."—"*For ever!*" repeated Melmoth; "well-spoken, *my* bride. You will then be mine *for ever?*—will you, Isidora?"—"Yes!—yes!—I have said so. But the sun is about to rise, I feel the increasing perfume of the orange blossoms, and the coolness of the morning air. Begone—I have staid too long here—the domestics may be about, and observe you—begone, I implore you."—"I go—but one word—for to me the rising of the sun, and the appearance of your domestics, and every thing in heaven above, and earth beneath, is equally unimportant. Let the sun stay

below the horizon and wait for me. *You are mine!*"—"Yes, I am yours; but you must solicit my family."—"Oh, doubtless!—solicitation is so congenial to my habits."—"And"—— "Well, what?—you hesitate."—"I hesitate," said the ingenuous and timid Isidora, "because"—— "Well?"—"Because," she added, bursting into tears, "those with whom you speak will not utter to God language like mine. They will speak to you of wealth and dower; they will inquire about that region where you have told me your rich and wide possessions are held; and should they ask me of them, how shall I answer?"

"At these words, Melmoth approached as close as possible to the casement, and uttered a certain word which Isidora did not at first appear to hear, or understand—trembling she repeated her request. In a still lower tone the answer was returned. Incredulous, and hoping that the answer had deceived her, she again repeated her

petition. A withering monosyllable, not to be told, thundered in her ears,—and she shrieked as she closed the casement. Alas! the casement only shut out the form of the stranger—not his image.

CHAPTER XIX.

He saw the eternal fire that keeps,
In the unfathomable deeps,
Its power for ever, and made a sign
To the morning prince divine;
Who came across the sulphurous flood,
Obedient to the master-call,
And in angel-beauty stood,
High on his star-lit pedestal.

"In this part of the manuscript, which I read in the vault of Adonijah the Jew," said Monçada, continuing his narrative, "there were several pages destroyed, and the contents of many following wholly obliterated—nor could Adonijah supply

the deficiency. From the next pages that were legible, it appeared that Isidora imprudently continued to permit her mysterious visitor to frequent the garden at night, and to converse with him from the casement, though unable to prevail on him to declare himself to her family, and perhaps conscious that his declaration would not be too favourably received. Such, at least, appeared to be the meaning of the next lines I could decypher.

"She had renewed, in these nightly conferences, her former visionary existence. Her whole day was but a long thought of the hour at which she expected to see him. In the day-time she was silent, pensive, abstracted, feeding on thought—with the evening her spirits perceptibly though softly rose, like those of one who has a secret and incommunicable store of delight; and her mind became like that flower that unfolds its leaves, and diffuses its odours, only on the approach of night.

"The season favoured this fatal delu-

sion. It was that rage of summer when we begin to respire only towards evening, and the balmy and brilliant night is our day. The day itself is passed in a languid and feverish doze. At night alone she existed,—at her moon-lit casement alone she breathed freely; and never did the moonlight fall on a lovelier form, or gild a more angelic brow, or gleam on eyes that returned more pure and congenial rays. The mutual and friendly light seemed like the correspondence of spirits who glided on the alternate beams, and, passing from the glow of the planet to the glory of a mortal eye, felt that to reside in either was heaven. * * *

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" She lingered at that casement till she imagined that the clipped and artificially straitened treillage of the garden was the luxuriant and undulating foliage of the trees of her paradise isle—that the flowers had the same odour as that of the untrained and spontaneous roses that once showered

their leaves under her naked feet—that the birds sung to her as they had once done when the vesper-hymn of her pure heart ascended along with their closing notes, and formed the holiest and most acceptable anthem that perhaps ever wooed the evening-breeze to waft it to heaven.

" This delusion would soon cease. The stiff and stern monotony of the parterre, where even the productions of nature held their place as if under the constraint of duty, forced the conviction of its unnatural regularity on her eye and soul, and she turned to heaven for relief. Who does not, even in the first sweet agony of passion? Then we tell that tale to heaven which we would not trust to the ear of mortal—and in the withering hour that must come to all whose love is only mortal, we again call on that heaven which we have intrusted with our secret, to send us back one bright messenger of consolation on those thousand rays that its bright, and cold, and passionless orbs, are for ever

pouring on the earth as if in mockery. We ask, but is the petition heard or answered? We weep, but do not we feel that those tears are like rain falling on the sea? *Mare infructuosum.* No matter. Revelation assures us there is a period coming, when all petitions suited to our state shall be granted, and when "tears shall be wiped from all eyes." In revelation, then, let us trust—in any thing but our own hearts. But Isidora had not yet learned that theology of the skies, whose text is, "Let us go into the house of mourning." To her still the night was day, and her sun was the "moon walking in its brightness." When she beheld it, the recollections of the isle rushed on her heart like a flood; and a figure soon appeared to recal and to realize them.

"That figure appeared to her every night without disturbance or interruption; and though her knowledge of the severe restraint and regularity of the household caused her some surprise at the facility

with which Melmoth apparently defied both, and visited the garden every night, yet such was the influence of her former dream-like and romantic existence, that his continued presence, under circumstances so extraordinary, never drew from her a question with regard to the means by which he was enabled to surmount difficulties insurmountable to all others.

"There were, indeed, two extraordinary circumstances attendant on these meetings. Though seeing each other again in Spain, after an interval of three years elapsing since they had parted on the shores of an isle in the Indian sea, neither had ever inquired what circumstances could have led to a meeting so unexpected and extraordinary. On Isidora's part this incurious feeling was easily accounted for. Her former existence had been one of such a fabulous and fantastic character, that the improbable had become familiar to her,—and the familiar only, improbable. Wonders were her natural element; and she felt,

perhaps, less surprised at seeing Melmoth in Spain, than when she first beheld him treading the sands of her lonely island. With Melmoth the cause was different, though the effect was the same. His destiny forbid alike curiosity or surprise. The world could show him no greater marvel than his own existence; and the facility with which he himself passed from region to region, mingling with, yet distinct from all his species, like a wearied and uninterested spectator rambling through the various seats of some vast theatre, where he knows none of the audience, would have prevented his feeling astonishment, had he encountered Isidora on the summit of the Andes.

"During a month, through the course of which she had tacitly permitted these nightly visits beneath her casement—(at a distance which indeed might have defied Spanish jealousy itself to devise matter of suspicion out of,—the balcony of her window being nearly fourteen feet above the

level of the garden, where Melmoth stood) —during this month, Isidora rapidly, but imperceptibly, graduated through those stages of feeling which all who love have alike experienced, whether the stream of passion be smooth or obstructed. In the first, she was full of anxiety to speak and to listen, to hear and to be heard. She had all the wonders of her new existence to relate; and perhaps that indefinite and unselfish hope of magnifying herself in the eyes of him she loved, which induces us in our first encounter to display all the eloquence, all the powers, all the attractions we possess, not with the pride of a competitor, but with the humiliation of a victim. The conquered city displays all its wealth in hopes of propitiating the conqueror. It decorates him with all its spoils, and feels prouder to behold him arrayed in them, than when she wore them in triumph herself. That is the first bright hour of excitement, of trembling, but hopeful and felicitous anxiety. Then we

think we never can display enough of talent, of imagination, of all that can interest, of all that can dazzle. We pride ourselves in the homage we receive from society, from the hope of sacrificing that homage to our beloved—we feel a pure and almost spiritualized delight in our own praises, from imagining they render us more worthy of meriting *his*, from whom we have received the *grace* of love to deserve them—we glorify ourselves, that we may be enabled to render back the glory to him from whom we received it, and for whom we have kept it in trust, only to tender it back with that rich and accumulated interest of the heart, of which we would pay the uttermost farthing, if the payment exacted the last vibration of its fibres,—the last drop of its blood. No saint who ever viewed a miracle performed by himself with a holy and self-annihilating abstraction from *seity*, has perhaps felt a purer sentiment of perfect devotedness, than the female who, in her first hours of love,

offers, at the feet of her worshipped one, the brilliant wreath of music, painting, and eloquence,—and only hopes, with an unuttered sigh, that the rose of love will not be unnoticed in the garland.

"Oh! how delicious it is to such a being (and such was Isidora) to touch her harp amid crowds, and watch, when the noisy and tasteless bravoes have ceased, for the heart-drawn sigh of *the one*, to whom alone her soul, not her fingers, have played,—and whose single sigh is heard, and heard alone, amid the plaudits of thousands! Yet how delicious to her to whisper to herself, "I heard his sigh, but he has heard the applause!"

"And when she glides through the dance, and in touching, with easy and accustomed grace, the hands of many, she feels there is but one hand whose touch she can recognize; and, waiting for its thrilling and life-like vibration, moves on like a statue, cold and graceful, till the Pygmalion-touch warms her into woman,

and the marble melts into flesh under the hands of the resistless moulder. And her movements betray, at that moment, the unwonted and half-unconscious impulses of that fair image to which love had given life, and who luxuriated in the vivid and newly-tried enjoyment of that animation which the passion of her lover had breathed into her frame. And when the splendid portfolio is displayed, or the richly-wrought tapestry expanded by outstretched arms, and cavaliers gaze, and ladies envy, and every eye is busy in examination, and every tongue loud in praise, just in the inverted proportion of the ability of the one to scrutinize with accuracy, and the other to applaud with taste—then to throw round the secret silent glance, that searches for that eye whose light alone, to her intoxicated gaze, contains all judgment, all taste, all feeling—for that lip whose very censure would be dearer than the applause of a world!—To hear, with soft and submissive tranquillity, censure

and remark, praise and comment, but to turn for ever the appealing look to one who alone can understand, and whose swiftly-answering glance can alone reward it!—This—this had been Isidora's hope. Even in the isle where he first saw her in the infancy of her intellect, she had felt the consciousness of superior powers, which were then her solace, not her pride. Her value for herself rose with her devotion to him. Her passion became her pride; and the enlarged resources of her mind, (for Christianity under its most corrupt form enlarges every mind), made her at first believe, that to behold her admired as she was for her loveliness, her talents, and her wealth, would compel this proudest and most eccentric of beings to prostrate himself before her, or at least to acknowledge the power of those acquirements which she had so painfully been arrived at the knowledge of, since her involuntary introduction into European society.

"This had been her hope during the

earlier period of his visits; but innocent and flattering to its object as it was, she was disappointed. To Melmoth "nothing was new under the sun." Talent was to him a burden. He knew more than man could tell him, or woman either. Accomplishments were a bauble—the rattle teazed his ear, and he flung it away. Beauty was a flower he looked on only to scorn, and touched only to wither. Wealth and distinction he appreciated as they deserved, but not with the placid disdain of the philosopher, or the holy abstraction of the saint, but with that "fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation," to which he believed their possessors irreversibly devoted, and to the infliction of which he looked forward with perhaps a feeling like that of those executioners who, at the command of Mithridates, poured the melted ore of his golden chains down the throat of the Roman ambassador.

"With such feelings, and others that

cannot be told, Melmoth experienced an indescribable relief from the eternal fire that was already kindled within him, in the perfect and unsullied freshness of what may be called the untrodden verdure of Immalee's heart,—for she was Immalee still to him. She was the Oasis of his desert—the fountain at which he drank, and forgot his passage over the burning sands—and the *burning* sands to which his passage must conduct him. He sat under the shade of the gourd, and forgot the worm was working at its root;—perhaps the undying worm that gnawed, and coiled, and festered in his own heart, might have made him forget the corrosions of that he himself had sown in hers.

"Isidora, before the second week of their interview, had lowered her pretensions. She had given up the hope to interest or to dazzle—that hope which is twin-born with love in the purest female heart. She now had concentrated all her hopes, and all her heart, no longer in the

ambition *to be* beloved, but in the sole wish *to* love. She no longer alluded to the enlargement of her faculties, the acquisition of new powers, and the expansion and cultivation of her taste. She ceased to speak—she sought only to listen—then her wish subsided into that quiet listening for his form alone, which seemed to transfer the office of hearing into the eyes, or rather, to identify both. She saw him long before he appeared,—and heard him though he did not speak. They have been in each other's presence for the short hours of a Spanish summer's night,—Isidora's eyes alternately fixed on the sun-like moon, and on her mysterious lover,—while he, without uttering a word, leaned against the pillars of her balcony, or the trunk of the giant myrtle-tree, which cast the shade he loved, even by night, over his portentous expression,—and they never uttered a word to each other, till the waving of Isidora's hand, as the dawn appeared, was the tacit signal for their parting.

"This is the marked graduation of profound feeling. Language is no longer necessary to those whose beating hearts converse audibly—whose eyes, even by moonlight, are more intelligible to each other's stolen and shadowed glances, than the broad converse of face to face in the brightest sunshine—to whom, in the exquisite inversion of earthly feeling and habit, darkness is light, and silence eloquence.

"At their last interviews, Isidora sometimes spoke,—but it was only to remind her lover, in a soft and chastened tone, of a promise which it seems he had at one time made of disclosing himself to her parents, and demanding her at their hands. Something she murmured also of her declining health—her exhausted spirits—her breaking heart—the long delay—the hope deferred—the mysterious meeting; and while she spoke she wept, but hid her tears from him.

"It is thus, Oh God! we are doomed

(and justly doomed when we fix our hearts on any thing below thee) to feel those hearts repelled like the dove who hovered over the shoreless ocean, and found not a spot where her foot might rest,—not a green leaf to bring back in her beak. Oh that the ark of mercy may open to such souls, and receive them from that stormy world of deluge and of wrath, with which they are unable to contend, and where they can find no resting-place!

"Isidora now had arrived at the last stage of that painful pilgrimage through which she had been led by a stern and reluctant guide.

"In its first, with the innocent and venial art of woman, she had tried to interest him by the display of her new acquirements, without the consciousness that they were not new to him. The harmony of civilized society, of which she was at once weary and proud, was discord to his ear. He had examined all the strings that formed this curious but ill-

constructed instrument, and found them all false.

"In the second, she was satisfied with merely beholding him. His presence formed the atmosphere of her existence—in it alone she breathed. She said to herself, as evening approached, "I shall see him!"—and the burden of life rolled from her heart as she internally uttered the words. The constraint, the gloom, the monotony of her existence, vanished like clouds at the sun, or rather like those clouds assuming such gorgeous and resplendent colours, that they seemed to have been painted by the finger of happiness itself. The brilliant hue diffused itself over every object of her eye and heart. Her mother appeared no longer a cold and gloomy bigot, and even her brother seemed kind. There was not a tree in the garden whose foliage was not illumined as by the light of a setting sun; and the breeze spoke to her in a voice whose melody was borrowed from her own heart.

" When at length she saw him,—when she said to herself, He is there,—she felt as if all the felicity of earth was comprised in that single sensation,—at least she felt that all her own was. She no longer indulged the wish to attract or to subdue him—absorbed in his existence, she forgot her own —immersed in the consciousness of her own felicity, she lost the wish, or rather the pride, of BESTOWING it. In the impassioned revelry of the heart, she flung the pearl of existence into the draught in which she pledged her lover, and saw it melt away without a sigh. But now she was beginning to feel, that for this intensity of feeling, this profound devotedness, she was entitled at least to an honourable acknowledgement on the part of her lover; and that the mysterious delay in which her existence was wasted, might make that acknowledgement come perhaps too late. She expressed this to him; but to these appeals, (not the least affecting of which had no language but that of looks), he replied

only by a profound but uneasy silence, or by a levity whose wild and frightful sallies had something in them still more alarming.

"At times he appeared even to insult the heart over which he had triumphed, and to affect to doubt his conquest with the air of one who is revelling in its certainty, and who mocks the captive by asking "if it is really in chains?"

"You do not love?" he would say;—"you cannot love *me* at least. Love, in your happy Christian country, must be the result of cultivated taste,—of harmonized habits,—of a felicitous congeniality of pursuits,—of thought, and hopes, and feelings, that, in the sublime language of the Jewish poet, (prophet I meant), 'tell and certify to each other; and though they have neither speech or language, a voice is heard among them.' You cannot love a being repulsive in his appearance,—eccentric in his habits,—wild and unsearchable in his feelings,—and inaccessible in the settled purpose of his fearful and fearless

existence. No," he added in a melancholy and decided tone of voice, " you cannot love me under the circumstances of your new existence. Once——but that is past.—You are now a baptized daughter of the Catholic church,—the member of a civilized community,—the child of a family that knows not the stranger. What, then, is there between me and thee, Isidora, or, as your Fra Jose would phrase it, (if he knows so much Greek), τι εμοι και σοι."—" I loved you," answered the Spanish maiden, speaking in the same pure, firm, and tender voice in which she had spoken when she first was the sole goddess of her fairy and flowery isle; " I loved you before I was a Christian. They have changed my creed—but they never can change my heart. I love you still—I will be yours for ever! On the shore of the desolate isle,—from the grated window of my Christian prison,—I utter the same sounds. What can woman, what can man, in all the boasted superiority of his character and

feeling, (which I have learned only since I became a Christian, or an European), do more? You but insult me when you appear to doubt that feeling, which you may wish to have analysed, because you do not experience or cannot comprehend it. Tell me, then, *what it is to love?* I defy all your eloquence, all your sophistry, to answer the question as truly as I can. If you would wish to know what is love, inquire not at the tongue of man, but at the heart of woman."—"What is love?" said Melmoth; "is that the question?"—"You doubt that I love," said Isidora—"tell me, then, what is love?"—"You have imposed on me a task," said Melmoth smiling, but not in mirth, "so congenial to my feelings and habits of thought, that the execution will doubtless be inimitable. To love, beautiful Isidora, is to live in a world of the heart's own creation—all whose forms and colours are as brilliant as they are deceptive and unreal. To those who love there is neither day or night, summer

or winter, society or solitude. They have but two eras in their delicious but visionary existence,—and those are thus marked in the heart's calendar—*presence*—*absence*. These are the substitutes for all the distinctions of nature and society. The world to them contains but one individual,—and that individual is to them the world as well as its single inmate. The atmosphere of his presence is the only air they can breathe in,—and the light of his eye the only sun of their creation, in whose rays they bask and live."—"Then I love," said Isidora internally. "To love," pursued Melmoth, "is to live in an existence of perpetual contradictions—to feel that absence is insupportable, and yet be doomed to experience the presence of the object as almost equally so—to be full of ten thousand thoughts while he is absent, the confession of which we dream will render our next meeting delicious, yet when the hour of meeting arrives, to feel ourselves, by a timidity alike oppressive and unac-

countable, robbed of the power of expressing one—to be eloquent in his absence, and dumb in his presence—to watch for the hour of his return as for the dawn of a new existence, yet when it arrives, to feel all those powers suspended which we imagined it would restore to energy—*to be the statue that meets the sun, but without the music his presence should draw from it*—to watch for the light of his looks, as a traveller in the deserts looks for the rising of the sun; and when it bursts on our awakened world, to sink fainting under its overwhelming and intolerable glory, and almost wish it were night again—this is love!"—"Then I believe I love," said Isidora half audibly. "To feel," added Melmoth with increasing energy, "that our existence is so absorbed in his, that we have lost all consciousness but of his presence—all sympathy but of his enjoyments—all sense of suffering but when he suffers—*to be* only because *he is*—and to have no other use of being but to devote it to him,

while our humiliation increases in proportion to our devotedness; and the lower you bow before your idol, the prostrations seem less and less worthy of being the expression of your devotion,—till you are only *his*, when you are not yourself—To feel that to the sacrifice of yourself, all other sacrifices are inferior; and in it, therefore, all other sacrifices must be included. That she who loves, must remember no longer her individual existence, her natural existence—that she must consider parents, country, nature, society, religion itself—(you tremble, Immalee—Isidora I would say)—only as grains of incense flung on the altar of the heart, to burn and exhale their sacrificed odours there."—"Then I do love," said Isidora; and she wept and trembled indeed at this terrible confession—"for I have forgot the ties they told me were natural,—the country of which they said I was a native. I will renounce, if it must be so, parents,—country,—the habits

which I have acquired,—the thoughts which I have learnt,—the religion which I——Oh no! my God! my Saviour!" she exclaimed, darting from the casement, and clinging to the crucifix—"No! I will never renounce you!—I will never renounce you!—you will not forsake me in the hour of death!—you will not desert me in the moment of trial!—you will not forsake me at this moment!"

"By the wax-lights that burned in her apartment, Melmoth could see her prostrate before the sacred image. He could see that devotion of the heart which made it throb almost visibly in the white and palpitating bosom—the clasped hands that seemed imploring aid against that rebellious heart, whose beatings they vainly struggled to repress; and then, locked and upraised, asked forgiveness from heaven for their fruitless opposition. He could see the wild but profound devotion with which she clung to the crucifix,—and he shuddered to behold it. He never gazed

on that symbol,—his eyes were immediately averted;—yet now he looked long and intently at her as she knelt before it. He seemed to suspend the diabolical instinct that governed his existence, and to view her for the pure pleasure of sight. Her prostrate figure,—her rich robes that floated round her like drapery round an inviolate shrine,—her locks of light streaming over her naked shoulders,—her small white hands locked in agony of prayer,—the purity of expression that seemed to identify the agent with the employment, and made one believe they saw not a suppliant, but the embodied spirit of supplication, and feel, that lips like those had never held communion with aught below heaven.—All this Melmoth beheld; and feeling that in this he could never participate, he turned away his head in stern and bitter agony,—and the moon-beam that met his burning eye saw no tear there.

" Had he looked a moment longer, he might have beheld a change in the expres-

sion of Isidora too flattering to his pride, if not to his heart. He might have marked all that profound and perilous absorption of the soul, when it is determined to penetrate the mysteries of love or of religion, and chuse "whom it will serve"—that *pause* on the brink of an abyss, in which all its energies, its passions, and its powers, are to be immersed—that pause, while the balance is trembling (and we tremble with it) between God and man.

"In a few moments, Isidora arose from before the cross. There was more composure, more elevation in her air. There was also that air of decision which an unreserved appeal to the Searcher of hearts never fails to communicate even to the weakest of those he has made.

"Melmoth, returning to his station beneath the casement, looked on her for some time with a mixture of compassion and wonder—feelings that he hasted to repel, as he eagerly demanded, "What proof are you ready to give of *that* love I have

described—of that which alone deserves the name?"—"Every proof," answered Isidora firmly, "that the most devoted of the daughters of man can give—my heart and hand,—my resolution to be yours amid mystery and grief,—to follow you in exile and loneliness (if it must be) through the world!"

"As she spoke, there was a light in her eye,—a glow on her brow,—an expansive and irradiated sublimity around her figure,—that made it appear like the rare and glorious vision of the personified union of passion and purity,—as if those eternal rivals had agreed to reconcile their claims, to meet on the confines of their respective dominions, and had selected the form of Isidora as the temple in which their league might be hallowed, and their union consummated—and never were the opposite divinities so deliciously lodged. They forgot their ancient feuds, and agreed to dwell there for ever.

"There was a grandeur, too, about her

slender form, that seemed to announce that pride of purity,—that confidence in external weakness, and internal energy,—that conquest without armour,—that victory over the victor, which makes the latter blush at his triumph, and compels him to bow to the standard of the besieged fortress at the moment of its surrender. She stood like a woman devoted, but not humiliated by her devotion—uniting tenderness with magnanimity—willing to sacrifice every thing to her lover, but that which must lessen the value of the sacrifice in his eyes —willing to be the victim, but feeling worthy to be the priestess.

"Melmoth gazed on her as she stood. One generous, one human feeling, throbbed in his veins, and thrilled in his heart. He saw her in her beauty,—her devotedness,—her pure and perfect innocence,—her sole feeling for one who could not, by the fearful power of his unnatural existence, feel for mortal being. He turned aside, and did not weep; or if he did,

wiped away his tears, as a fiend might do, with his burning talons, when he sees a new victim arrive for torture; and, *repenting of his repentance*, rends away *the blot* of compunction, and arms himself for his task of renewed infliction.

"Well, then, Isidora, you will give me no proof of your love? Is that what I must understand?"—"Demand," answered the innocent and high-souled Isidora, "any proof that woman ought to give—more is not in human power—less would render the proof of no value!"

"Such was the impression that these words made on Melmoth, whose heart, however, plunged in unutterable crimes, had never been polluted by sensuality, that he started from the spot where he stood,—gazed on her for a moment,—and then exclaimed, "Well! you have given me proofs of love unquestionable! It remains for me to give you a proof of that love which I have described—of that love which only *you* could in-

spire—of that love which, under happier circumstances, I might—— But no matter—it is not my business to analyse the feeling, but to give the proof." He extended his arm toward the casement at which she stood.—" Would you then consent to unite your destiny with mine? Would you indeed be mine amid mystery and sorrow? Would you follow me from land to sea, and from sea to land,—a restless, homeless, devoted being,—with the brand on your brow, and the curse on your name? Would you indeed *be mine?* —my own—my only Immalee?"—" I would—I will!"—" Then," answered Melmoth, " on this spot receive the proof of my eternal gratitude. On this spot I renounce your sight!—I disannul your engagement!—I fly from you for ever!" And as he spoke, he disappeared.

CHAPTER XX.

I'll not wed Paris,—Romeo is my husband.
SHAKESPEARE.

"ISIDORA was so accustomed to the wild exclamations and (to her) unintelligible allusions of her mysterious lover, that she felt no unwonted alarm at his singular language, and abrupt departure. There was nothing in either more menacing or formidable than she had often witnessed; and she recollected, that after these paroxysms, he often re-appeared in a mood comparatively tranquil. She felt sustain-

ed, therefore, by this reflection,—and perhaps by that mysterious conviction impressed on the hearts of those who love profoundly—that passion must always be united with suffering; and she seemed to hear, with a kind of melancholy submission to the fatality of love, that her lot was to suffer from lips that were sure to verify the oracle. The disappearance, therefore, of Melmoth, gave her less surprise than a summons from her mother a few hours after, which was delivered in these words: "Madonna Isidora, your lady-mother desires your presence in the tapestried chamber—having received intelligence by a certain express, which she deems fitting you should be acquainted withal."

"Isidora had been in some degree prepared for extraordinary intelligence by an extraordinary bustle in this grave and quiet household. She had heard steps passing, and voices resounding, but

"She wist not what they were,"

and thought not of what they meant. She imagined that her mother might have some communication to make about some intricate point of conscience which Fra Jose had not discussed to her satisfaction, from which she would make an instant transition to the levity visible in the mode in which one attendant damsel arranged her hair, and the suspected sound of a ghitarra under the window of another, and then fly off at a tangent to inquire how the capons were fed, and why the eggs and Muscadine had not been duly prepared for Fra Jose's supper. Then would she fret about the family clock not chiming synchronically with the bells of the neighbouring church where she performed her devotions. And finally, she fretted about every thing, from the fattening of the "pullen," and the preparation for the olio, up to the increasing feuds between the Molinists and Jausenists, which had already visited Spain, and the deadly dispute between the Do-

minican and Franciscan orders, relative to the habit in which it was most effective to salvation for the dying body of the sinner to be wrapped. So between her kitchen and her oratory,—her prayers to the saints, and her scoldings to her servants,—her devotion and her anger,—Donna Clara continued to keep herself and domestics in a perpetual state of interesting occupation and gentle excitement.

"Something of this Isidora expected on the summons, and she was, therefore, surprised to see Donna Clara seated at her writing desk,—a large and fairly written manuscript of a letter extended before her,—and to hear words thereafter uttered thus: "Daughter, I have sent for you, that you might with me partake of the pleasure these lines should afford both; and that you may do so, I desire you to sit and hear while they are read to you."

"Donna Clara, as she uttered these words, was seated in a monstrous high-backed chair, of which she actually seem-

ed a part, so wooden was her figure, so moveless her features, so lack-lustre her eyes.

" Isidora curtsied low, and sat on one of the cushions with which the room was heaped,—while a spectacled duenna, enthroned on another cushion at the right hand of Donna Clara, read, with sundry pauses and some difficulty, the following letter, which Donna Clara had just received from her husband, who had landed, not *at Ossuna* *, but at a real sea-port town in Spain, and was now on his way to join his family.

" Donna Clara,

" It is about a year since I received your letter advising me of the recovery of our daughter, whom we believed lost with her nurse on her voyage to India when an infant, to which I would sooner have re-

* Vide Don Quixote, Vol. II. Smollet's Translation.

plied, were I not otherwise hindered by concerns of business.

"I would have you understand, that I rejoice not so much that I have recovered a daughter, as that heaven hath regained a soul and a subject, as it were, *e faucibus Draconis—e profundis Barathri*—the which terms Fra Jose will make plain to your weaker comprehension.

"I trust that, through the ministry of that devout servant of God and the church, she is now become as complete a Catholic in all points necessary, absolute, doubtful, or incomprehensible,—formal, essential, venial, and indispensible, as becomes the daughter of an old Christian such as I (though unworthy of that honour) boast myself to be. Moreover, I expect to find her, as a Spanish maiden should be, equipped and accomplished with all the virtues pertaining to that character, especially those of discretion and reserve. The which qualities, as I have always perceived

to reside in you, so I hope you have laboured to transfer to her,—a transfer by which the receiver is enriched, and the giver not impoverished.

"Finally, as maidens should be rewarded for their chastity and reserve by being joined in wedlock with a worthy husband, so it is the duty of a careful father to provide such a one for his daughter, that she do not pass her marriageable age, and sit in discontent and squalidness at home, as one overlooked of the other sex. My fatherly care, therefore, moving me, I shall bring with me one who is to be her husband, Don Gregorio Montilla, of whose qualifications I have not now leisure to speak, but whom I expect she will receive as becomes the dutiful daughter, and you as the obedient wife, of

FRANCISCO DI ALIAGA."

"You have heard your father's letter, daughter," said Donna Clara, placing herself as in act to speak, "and doubtless sit

silent in expectation of hearing from me a rehearsal of the duties pertaining to the state on which you are so soon to enter, and which, I take it, are three; that is to say, obedience, silence, and thriftiness. And first of the first, which, as I conceive, divides itself into thirteen heads,"—— "Holy saints!" said the duenna under her breath, "how pale Madonna Isidora grows!" —"First of the first," continued Donna Clara, clearing her throat, elevating her spectacles with one hand, and fixing three demonstrative fingers of the other on a huge clasped volume, containing the life of St Francis Xavier, that lay on the desk before her,—"as touching the thirteen heads into which the first divides itself, the eleven first, I take it, are the most profitable—the two last I shall leave you to be instructed in by your husband. First, then,"—— Here she was interrupted by a slight noise, which did not, however, draw her attention, till she was startled by a scream from the duenna,

who exclaimed, " The Virgin be my protection! Madonna Isidora has fainted!"

" Donna Clara lowered her spectacles, glanced at the figure of her daughter, who had fallen from her cushion, and lay breathless on the floor, and, after a short pause, replied, " She *has* fainted. Raise her.—Call for assistance, and apply some cold water, or bear her into the open air. I fear I have lost the mark in the life of this holy saint," muttered Donna Clara when alone; " this comes of this foolish business of love and marriage. I never loved in my life, thank the saints!—and as to marriage, that is according to the will of God and of our parents."

" The unfortunate Isidora was lifted from the floor, conveyed into the open air, whose breath had the same effect on her still elementary existence, that water was said to have on that of the *ombre pez*, (man-fish), of whom the popular traditions of Barcelona were at that time, and still have been, rife.

"She recovered; and sending an apology to Donna Clara for her sudden indisposition, intreated her attendants to leave her, as she wished to be alone. Alone!—that is a word to which those who love annex but one idea,—that of being in society with one who is their all. She wished in this (to her) terrible emergency, to ask counsel of him whose image was ever present to her, and whose voice she heard with the mind's ear distinctly even in absence.

"The crisis was indeed one calculated to try a female heart; and Isidora's, with its potency of feeling, opposed to utter destitution of judgment and of experience,—its native habits of resolution and self-direction, and its acquired ones of timidity and diffidence almost to despondency,—became the victim of emotions, whose struggle seemed at first to threaten her reason.

"Her former independent and instinctive existence revived in her heart at some

moments, and suggested to her resolutions wild and desperate, but such as the most timid females have been known, under the pressure of a fearful exigency, to purpose, and even to execute. Then the constraint of her new habits,—the severity of her factitious existence,—and the solemn power of her newly-learned but deeply-felt religion,—made her renounce all thoughts of resistance or opposition, as offences against heaven.

" Her former feelings, her new duties, beat in terrible conflict against her heart; and, trembling at the isthmus on which she stood, she felt it, under the influence of opposing tides, narrowing every moment under her feet.

" This was a dreadful day to her. She had sufficient time for reflection, but she had within her the conviction that reflection could be of no use,—that the circumstances in which she was placed, not her own thoughts, must decide for her,—and

that, situated as she was, mental power was no match for physical.

"There is not, perhaps, a more painful exercise of the mind than that of treading, with weary and impatient pace, the entire round of thought, and arriving at the same conclusion for ever; then setting out again with increased speed and diminished strength, and again returning to the very same spot—of sending out all our faculties on a voyage of discovery, and seeing them all return empty, and watch the wrecks as they drift helplessly along, and sink before the eye that hailed their outward expedition with joy and confidence.

"All that day she thought how it was possible to liberate herself from her situation, while the feeling that liberation was impossible clung to the bottom of her heart; and this sensation of the energies of the soul in all their strength, being in vain opposed to imbecillity and mediocrity, when aided by circumstances, is one

productive alike of melancholy and of irritation. We feel, like prisoners in romance, bound by threads to which the power of magic has given the force of adamant.

" To those whose minds incline them rather to observe, than to sympathize with the varieties of human feeling, it would have been interesting to watch the restless agony of Isidora, contrasted with the cold and serene satisfaction of her mother, who employed the whole of the day in composing, with the assistance of Fra Jose, what Juvenal calls " *verbosa et grandis epistola,*" in answer to that of her husband; and to conceive how two human beings, apparently of similarly-constructed organs, and destined apparently to sympathize with each other, could draw from the same fountain waters sweet and bitter.

" On her plea of continued indisposition, Isidora was excused from appearing before her mother during the remainder of the day. The night came on,—the night, which, by concealing the artificial

objects and manners which surrounded her, restored to her, in some degree, the consciousness of her former existence, and gave her a sense of independence she never felt by day. The absence of Melmoth increased her anxiety. She began to apprehend that his departure was intended to be final, and her heart sunk at the thought.

"To the mere reader of romance, it may seem incredible that a female of Isidora's energy and devotedness should feel anxiety or terror in a situation so common to a heroine. She has only to stand proof against all the importunities and authority of her family, and announce her desperate resolution to share the destiny of a mysterious and unacknowledged lover. All this sounds very plausible and interesting. Romances have been written and read, whose interest arose from the noble and impossible defiance of the heroine to all powers human and superhuman alike. But neither the writers or readers seem

ever to have taken into account the thousand petty external causes that operate on human agency with a force, if not more powerful, far more effective than the grand internal motive which makes so grand a figure in romance, and so rare and trivial a one in common life.

"Isidora would have died for him she loved. At the stake or the scaffold she would have avowed her passion, and triumphed in perishing as its victim. The mind can collect itself for one great effort, but it is exhausted by the eternally-recurring necessity of domestic conflicts,—victories by which she must lose, and defeats by which she might gain the praise of perseverance, and feel such gain was loss. The last single and terrible effort of the Jewish champion, in which he and his enemies perished together, must have been a luxury compared to his blind drudgery in his mill.

"Before Isidora lay that painful and perpetual struggle of fettered strength

with persecuting weakness, which, if the truth were told, would divest half the heroines of romance of the power or wish to contend against the difficulties that beset them. Her mansion was a prison—she had no power (and if she possessed the power, would never have exercised it) of obtaining an unpermitted or unobserved egress from the doors of the house for one moment. Thus her escape was completely barred; and had every door in the house been thrown open, she would have felt like a bird on its first flight from the cage, without a spray that she dared to rest on. Such was her prospect, even if she could effect her escape—at home it was worse.

"The stern and cold tone of authority in which her father's letter was written, gave her but little hope that in her father she would find a friend. Then the feeble and yet imperious mediocrity of her mother—the selfish and arrogant temper of Fernan—the powerful influence and incessant documentising of Fra Jose, whose

good-nature was no match for his love of authority—the daily domestic persecution —that vinegar that would wear out any rock—the being compelled to listen day after day to the same exhausting repetition of exhortation, chiding, reproach, and menace, or seek refuge in her chamber, to waste the weary hours in loneliness and tears—this strife maintained by one strong indeed in purpose, but feeble in power, against so many all sworn to work their will, and have their way—this perpetual conflict with evils so trivial in the items, but so heavy in the amount, to those who have the debt to pay daily and hourly,—was too much for the resolution of Isidora, and she wept in hopeless despondency, as she felt that already her courage shrunk from the encounter, and knew not what concessions might be extorted from her increasing inability of resistance.

"Oh!" she cried, clasping her hands in the extremity of her distress, "Oh that he were but here to direct, to counsel me!

—that he were here even no longer as my lover, but only as my adviser!"

"It is said that a certain power is always at hand to facilitate the wishes that the individual forms for his own injury; and so it should seem in the present instance,—for she had scarce uttered these words, when the shadow of Melmoth was seen darkening the garden walk,—and the next moment he was beneath the casement. As she saw him approach, she uttered a cry of mingled joy and fear, which he hushed by making a signal of silence with his hand, and then whispered, "I know it all!"

"Isidora was silent. She had nothing but her recent distress to communicate,—and of that, it appeared, he was already apprized. She waited, therefore, in mute anxiety for some words of counsel or of comfort. "I know all!" continued Melmoth; "your father has landed in Spain—he brings with him your destined husband. The fixed purpose of your

whole family, as obstinate as they are weak, it will be bootless in you to resist; and this day fortnight will see you the bride of Montilla."—" I will first be the bride of the grave," said Isidora, with perfect and fearful calmness.

" At these words, Melmoth advanced and gazed on her more closely. Any thing of intense and terrible resolution,—of feeling or action in extremity,—made harmony with the powerful but disordered chords of his soul. He required her to repeat the words—she did so, with quivering lip, but unfaultering voice. He advanced still nearer to gaze on her as she spoke. It was a beautiful and fearful sight to see her as she stood;—her marble face —her moveless features—her eyes in which burned the fixed and livid light of despair, like a lamp in a sepulchral vault—the lips that half opened, and remaining unclosed, appeared as if the speaker was unconscious of the words that had escaped

them, or rather, as if they had burst forth by involuntary and incontroulable impulse;—so she stood, like a statue, at her casement, the moonlight giving her white drapery the appearance of stone, and her wrought-up and determined mind lending the same rigidity to her expression. Melmoth himself felt confounded—appalled he could not feel. He retreated, and then returning, demanded, "Is this your resolution, Isidora?—and have you indeed resolution to"——"To die!" answered Isidora, with the same unaltered accent,—the same calm expression,—and seeming, as she spake, capable of all she expressed; and this union, in the same slight and tender form, of those eternal competitors, energy and fragility, beauty and death, made every human pulse in Melmoth's frame beat with a throbbing unknown before. "Can you, then," he said, with averted head, and in a tone that seemed ashamed of its own softness—"Can you, then, die for him you will not

live for?"—"I have said I will die sooner than be the bride of Montilla," answered Isidora. "Of death I know nothing, nor do I know much of life—but I would rather perish, than be the perjured wife of the man I cannot love."—"And why can you not love him?" said Melmoth, toying with the heart he held in his hand, like a mischievous boy with a bird, around whose leg he has fastened a string.—"Because I can love but one. You were the first human being I ever saw who could teach me language, and who taught me feeling. Your image is for ever before me, present or absent, sleeping or waking. I have seen fairer forms,—I have listened to softer voices,—I might have met gentler hearts,—but the first, the indelible image, is written on mine, and its characters will never be effaced till that heart is a clod of the valley. I loved you not for comeliness, —I loved you not for gay deportment, or fond language, or all that is said to be lovely in the eye of woman,—I loved you

because you were my *first*,—the sole connecting link between the human world and my heart,—the being who brought me acquainted with that wondrous instrument that lay unknown and untouched within and me, whose chords, as long as they vibrate, will disdain to obey any touch but that of their first mover—because your image is mixed in my imagination with all the glories of nature—because your voice, when I heard it first, was something in accordance with the murmur of the ocean, and the music of the stars. And still its tones recal the unimaginable blessedness of those scenes where first I heard it,—and still I listen to it like an exile who hears the music of his native country in a land that is very far off,—because nature and passion, memory and hope, alike cling round your image; and amid the light of my former existence, and the gloom of my present, there is but one form that retains its reality and its power through light and shade. I am like one who has traversed many

climates, and looks but to one sun as the light of all, whether bright or obscure. I have loved once—and for ever!" Then, trembling at the words she uttered, she added, with that sweet mixture of maiden pride and purity that redeems while it pledges the hostage of the heart, "The feelings I have entrusted you with may be abused, but never alienated."—"And these are your *real* feelings?" said Melmoth, pausing long, and moving his frame like one agitated by deep and uneasy thoughts. "Real!" repeated Isidora, with some transient glow on her cheek—"real! Can I utter any thing but what is real? Can I so soon forget my existence?" Melmoth looked up once more as she spoke—"If such is your resolution,—if such be your feelings indeed,"—— "And they are!—they are!" exclaimed Isidora, her tears bursting through the slender fingers, which, after extending towards him, she clasped over her burning eyes. "Then look to the alternative that awaits you!"

said Melmoth slowly, bringing out the words with difficulty, and, as it appeared, with some feeling for his victim; "a union with the man you cannot love,—or the perpetual hostility, the wearying, wasting, almost annihilating persecution of your family! Think of days that"—— "Oh let me not think!" cried Isidora, wringing her white and slender hands; "tell me—tell me what may be done to escape them!" —"Now, in good troth," answered Melmoth, knitting his brows with a most cogitative wrinkle, while it was impossible to discover whether his predominant expression was that of irony or profound and sincere feeling—"I know not what resource you have unless you wed me."—"Wed you!" cried Isidora, retreating from the window—"Wed you!" and she clasped her hands over her pale forehead; —and at this moment, when the hope of her heart, the thread on which her existence was suspended, was within her reach, she trembled to touch it. "Wed

you!—but how is that possible?"—"All things are possible to those who love," said Melmoth, with his sardonic smile, which was hid by the shades of the night. "And you will wed me, then, by the rites of the church of which I am a member?"—"Aye! or of any other!"—"Oh speak not so wildly!—say not *aye* in that horrible voice! Will you wed me as a Christian maiden should be wed?—Will you love me as a Christian wife should be loved? My former existence was like a dream,—but now I am awake. If I unite my destiny to yours,—if I abandon my family, my country, my"—— "If you do, how will you be the loser?—your family harasses and confines you—your country would shout to see you at the stake, for you have some heretical feelings about you, Isidora. And for the rest"—— "God!" said the poor victim, clasping her hands, and looking upwards, "God, aid me in this extremity!"—"If I am to wait here only as a witness to your devotions,"

said Melmoth with sullen asperity, "my stay will not be long."—"You cannot leave me, then, to struggle with fear and perplexity alone! How is it possible for me to escape, even if"—— "By whatever means I possess of entering this place and retiring unobserved,—by the same you may effect your escape. If you have resolution, the effort will cost you little,—if love,—nothing. Speak, shall I be here at this hour to-morrow night, to conduct you to liberty and"—— Safety he would have added, but his voice faultered. "*To-morrow night,*" said Isidora, after a long pause, and in accents almost inarticulate. She closed the casement as she spoke, and Melmoth slowly departed.

END OF THIRD VOLUME.